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THE LIFE OF TIMOTHY COOP

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THE  
LIFE OF TIMOTHY COOP;

OR, THE

Story of a Consecrated Business Career;

*WITH WHICH IS CONNECTED A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF A  
RELIGIOUS REFORMATION.*

W. T. MOORE, M.A., LL.D.

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.*

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## P R E F A C E.

**B**IOGRAPHY is the best of all history because character is the highest product of creative power. The history of warriors, battle-fields, governments, empires, etc., may be very interesting, and even instructive, but these have no real meaning until we come to character. Things were made to serve persons. Hence a world without personality would be a body without life, a mere framework without potentiality. Personality must, therefore, be regarded as the sublime end of the whole physical universe, and character is the end of personality.

In view of what has been stated, it is well that the biography of noble characters is occupying more and more an important place in our literature. And what is better still, these biographies are not confined to eminent statesmen, soldiers, or professional

men, as in former times ; but now there is a real demand for the biographies of worthy business men—men whose reputations chiefly depend upon business success.

And this is as it should be. Without our business men very little could be accomplished in any of the departments where the material for history has heretofore chiefly been found. What would armies do without the commissariat? and what would our missionary operations be without the business men who, through toil and labour, furnish the means necessary to carry on the work? It is, therefore, a pleasing thought that the facts concerning the lives of some of these men are deemed worthy of a somewhat permanent record.

Mr. Coop was a business man, but he was more than that. Nevertheless, if he had not been more than that he would not have lived in vain ; and even then a faithful record of his life would have been worthy of preservation. But when we add to the word business the word *consecrated*, then we get the sum-total of what Mr. Coop really was.

He was a business man, but he was a *consecrated business man*; everything that he possessed was regarded by him as belonging to the Lord; he was only the Lord's steward. No apology, therefore, need be given for the biography which follows.

Some years ago, at the earnest solicitation of friends, Mr. Coop began to jot down a few notes concerning his early life, and these notes were continued to the conclusion of his trip around the world; after which they were discontinued. All these notes, with letters and other sources of information, were deposited with the author of this volume just before Mr. Coop went to America for the last time, except the notes of the tour to Australia and Palestine which were sent over from America soon after Mr. Coop's arrival there.

After much unavoidable delay, the biography was begun in December of last year, and since that time has been pushed to completion as rapidly as possible. The work, though a labour of love, has been no easy task. Mr. Coop's notes are recorded without much regard to chronological order, and are often very

elliptical ; sometimes, indeed, almost unintelligible, on account of their brevity. However, occasionally these notes are clear and very fully written, and almost every instance of this kind has been copied into the work. He seems to have jotted down his impressions and recollections just as he may have had opportunity, and not unfrequently he simply refers to sources of information in books, pamphlets, magazines, or newspapers. Nevertheless, his notes have been of considerable help in the preparation of his life, and it is believed that some of his own narrations will be found very interesting and instructive.

There were two courses open to be pursued in the writing of the book. One was to take up some special matter in connection with his life and continue that to the end, and then go back and treat another matter in a similar way ; the other course was to take each year as it came and treat his whole life in chronological order. While the latter plan debarred the biographer from some privileges which he would have been glad to have had, nevertheless,

it was believed that upon the whole the work would be more useful as a repository of facts and incidents, if not so interesting, by following this method rather than the first. Consequently, the aim has been to treat the life of Mr. Coop in a succession of years, as far as this could possibly be done. It has furthermore been the aim to let the facts speak for themselves, without obtruding the opinions of the writer on the reader. Hence the personality of the Author does not directly appear in the body of the book at all.

It will be observed that Mr. Coop's whole religious life is practically divided into three periods. First, his early training and union with the Wesleyans ; second, his earnest examination of the Scriptures and final acceptance of believers' baptism, and consequent union with the Christian Brethren, or Churches of Christ, as they are now called ; and third, his visits to America, his acquaintance with the Disciples of Christ there, and his final determination to support a work in his native country on the lines of the American churches with regard to the



Communion question and several other kindred matters.

In treating very many delicate questions in connection with Mr. Coop's change of views and practices, it has been the constant aim of the writer to avoid all harsh expressions, and everything that would do injustice to anyone. Nevertheless, as this has been perhaps the most difficult part of the work, it is not affirmed that nothing has been written that ought not to be modified. However, it is strongly affirmed that nothing is set down in malice, or with any other intention than to present simply the truth. If there has been an error in a single respect, the Author begs the reader's charitable consideration, in view of the delicacy of the task which has been before him.

In treating of persons with whom Mr. Coop was associated, only those who died previous to his death have received any special biographical notice; and even as regards these it was impossible to say much, while in some cases nothing could be said at all, simply because no trustworthy facts concerning

the character of the persons could be obtained. Those who are now living, or have died since Mr. Coop died, have received no notice, except such mention of their names as may have been necessary to the completion of Mr. Coop's life.

It is scarcely needful to say that the chapters which follow have a historical value quite apart from any interest that may attach to Mr. Coop personally. It is believed that much valuable contemporaneous history is compressed into very small space, and not the least valuable part of this history is that which relates mainly to the rise and progress of the unique religious movements with which Mr. Coop was intimately associated. There has been no attempt to write a history of the "Christian Brethren," or "Churches of Christ," with which he was identified after his baptism ; and yet it is simply certain that, however insignificant this body of Christians may seem, and however many mistakes they may have made, their aim is so noble, and the need of such a movement is so apparent, that very few can fail to be interested in their history, even if not interested in

all their principles and methods. However, they have made some notable progress, and at their last Annual Meeting, held in London in August 1888, their whole number of churches amounted to one hundred and thirty-five, and their membership to 8,608. No attempt has been made to write a connected history of these religious people, but it is believed that in the following pages will be found grouped together many facts which will throw considerable light upon their rise and progress.

Much ground which has been gone over has been entirely new to the historian, and it is hoped that the work accomplished will at any rate make it easier for some one else to write concerning the same things, should such a task be undertaken. The present writer has done what he could. He has had almost insurmountable difficulties to overcome, and not the least of these has been the heavy pressure upon his time of other duties which constantly called him away from his task ; but, notwithstanding all these interruptions, the whole work has been completed within three months after it was fairly

begun, and that too without any serious injury to the writer, although the work has been performed under the severest mental and physical strain. The Author is conscious of imperfections in the work, but he is too thankful for what he has been enabled to accomplish to make apologies for any apparent failure. Such as it is, the work is now committed to the reading public, with the sincere prayer that this representation of a noble life may be the means of inspiring others to live as Mr. Coop himself lived.

LONDON : *March* 1889.



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# THE LIFE OF TIMOTHY COOP.

## CHAPTER I.

### BIRTH AND EARLY ASSOCIATIONS.

THE subject of this memoir was born on May 28th, 1817. The place of his birth was in the parish of West Houghton, about three and a half miles from Bolton, in Lancashire. He was the youngest but one of seven brothers, only one of whom is now living. He had also four sisters, none of whom are living. To sustain and even partially educate such a large family as this was no easy task in those days, and in that part of the country. Perhaps there has been no period in modern English history when there were more signs of poverty, distress, and hardship than at the time which is now under consideration. The Battle of Waterloo was fought two years before this period, and the whole country had been almost impoverished by the long and costly war with Napoleon.

Mr. Wallace, the able President of the Board of

Trade at this period, gave the following picture of the state of the country under the action of the monetary measures in progress from 1815 to 1823. On February 12th, 1823, he said, in his place in Parliament: "The general export of the country, in the four years from 1815 to 1819, had decreased £14,000,000 in official value; and he took the official value in preference to the declared, because it was from the quantity of goods produced that the best measure was derived of the employment afforded to the different classes of the community. In the year January 5th, 1819, to January 5th, 1820, the export of the country fell off no less than £11,000,000; and in looking at that part of it which was more completely only of British or Irish manufacture, he found that the difference in four years was £8,414,711; and that in the year from January 5th, 1820, to January 5th, 1821, there was a decrease of £8,929,629. Nobody, therefore, could be surprised that, at that period, the industry of the country appeared to be in a state of the utmost depression; that our manufacturers were most of them unemployed; that our agriculturists were many of them embarrassed; and that the country, to use the phrase of a friend of his in presenting a petition from the merchants of London, *exhibited all the appearance of a dying nation.*" The year 1821 brought about a favourable change, and this was continued for four years, though the change was not sufficient to make much difference in the state of the poor.

Now it was just through these years of depression that

the father of our subject was engaged with the problem of a large family to which attention has already been called, and this condition of the country will help to account for some of the struggles which are referred to in subsequent pages of this memoir.

Mr. William Coop, the father, had been in the army during part of the years of the conflict, and most of this time he was the servant of a Captain Plumb; and on account of his good nature, industry, and close attention to his duties he became quite a favourite, and was, consequently, more or less introduced into educated society. He was of a very teachable disposition and had a strong ambition to improve himself, and as he had considerable opportunity of seeing a good deal, he was not slow to take advantage of this, and add to his knowledge what became very useful to him in after life. He was fond of music, was a good singer, and was in the habit of attending Methodist meetings, mainly because he enjoyed the singing. Finally, it came to pass that a popular Methodist preacher was announced to preach at Bolton on the subject of Pentecost, and as the subject attracted the attention of Mr. Coop, he determined to attend the meeting to hear what the preacher had to say. Mr. Coop was considerably impressed by the sermon, and he continued his visits to the services, until step by step he was led to renounce his former life and become a member of the Methodist society.

After this he was careful to bring up his children in



the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Feeling the obligation to do so, and receiving heartily the doctrine of infant baptism, he had his son Timothy christened soon after his birth. For this purpose the child was taken to the Church of England, as that was the only place where the ceremony could be properly attended to, on account of the names being registered there, and as no registry was allowed to be kept by any other religious body. This was a great annoyance to Nonconformists in those days, and often subjected them to a very considerable inconvenience.

On this occasion there was a large party made up to go to the christening, which was to take place at Dean Church. The distance to this was about three miles, and in going to it the party called upon the old grandfather on the mother's side, who was a farmer, and who lived about half way, in order to get him to accompany them to stand as godfather to the child. After reaching the church, a curious mishap took place. In due course the ceremony began, and when the parson called out, "Who is the godfather?" the old grandfather stepped forward; and when the question was asked, "What is the name of the child?" the old grandfather called out, "TIMOTHY," and the parson went on saying, "Timothy, I baptize thee, etc." At this moment the mother spoke up, and said, "His name is not Timothy; we intended he should be called ROBERT." But it was too late, the name had already been pronounced, and the christening ceremony was ended, and he who was to be

Robert was, in spite of parents, now Timothy. The whole party were considerably confused and chagrined, and the mother took the matter to heart very seriously, so much so indeed that she wept bitterly during the whole of her return journey, and it was some time before she was at all reconciled to the mysterious change of name.

This incident seems to have made considerable impression upon the mind of Mr. Coop in after years, for he was accustomed to refer to it as if he regarded it as an interposition of Providence, directing that his name should be what it was instead of what his parents intended it to be. It is probable that this feeling was strengthened in him by some scriptural examples of a somewhat similar character. When speaking of the christening party, Mr. Coop was accustomed to say that he had no knowledge of what took place, and that he could only state these facts on the testimony of his parents, who related the incident to him after he was old enough to remember.

He says, in some notes he has left :—

“ The first thing I remember in my infancy was being placed in what was called ‘ a going chair,’ something like the three-legged stools, with an opening at the top for the baby to put out its head. It had four caster wheels, so that when the child began to move about the chair would move also, to the great delight of the child. I never forgot the impression it made upon me, and it seemed to be the first impulse of my nature in the direction of interest in anything mechanical.”

And this fact is interesting as pointing to the early

development of a mechanical genius. When he was only a few years old, he was accustomed to go into a joiner's shop and spend a great portion of his time there. Doubtless it was in this shop that he received impressions which followed him through life, not only as regards mechanical skill, but also as regards religious character. This joiner was a Methodist, and his house was the place of rendezvous for many of his denomination. Numbers of these would sit at night in his house and talk over their experiences, sing hymns, and read the Scriptures, while during the day it often happened that many would call in his shop for conference about religious matters. To all the conversation young Timothy was an interested listener. He was especially enchanted by the singing, though at this age he had little conception of the meaning of words. Nor did he have any very clear idea of what religion was, but he *felt* the power of the earnest men with whom he came in contact, and the impressions made upon his mind were never forgotten. Indeed, so vivid were they, that in after life he was accustomed to refer back to these as an evidence of the importance of a religious example before children. He always gave credit to these associations as having been influential, under the Divine blessing, in developing in him a desire to live the Christian life.

When he was about three years old he met with a serious accident. One winter morning a few of the children arose earlier than usual, as a great event was

to take place that morning, viz., a pig was to be killed. This always drew a number of children together. As it was not daylight on this morning when they arose, a candle was lighted, and in some way Timothy's night-dress caught fire and he was very seriously burnt. This caused him to lie by in bed for three or four months, during which time he suffered great pain. Of this period of distress he writes as follows:—

“I have distinct recollections of the neighbours coming to see me, and of their kindness in bringing me many little things. There was one man who used to come very regularly. He was a noted musician, and played the violin with considerable skill. He was also a teacher of music, and gave lessons on the violin and in singing to many persons in the neighbourhood. There was something very singular about him. He never came to see me that he did not call me ‘Titus.’ He would say, ‘Well, Titus, how are you getting on?’ etc. One day he called when I had been suffering very greatly. As soon as he came into my presence, he spoke as usual—‘Well, Titus, how are you getting on?’ I replied, ‘I have lost all my patience.’ This amused him very much, and from that time he always called me ‘Patience.’ Frequently when he saw me he would say, ‘Well, Patience, how is your patience getting on?’ He continued to call me by this name as long as he lived, which was until I was over twenty years of age. I was attended by an old Quaker quack-doctor. I have a very distinct recollection that I could smell him at a great distance whenever he was coming to see me, for his clothes were completely saturated with the odours of the pills he made for the use of his patients.”

It is easy to see in these facts a certain precocity of

intellect, which was the early promise of the eminent manhood which followed. It is rather remarkable that a child three years old should have such a keen appreciation of the kindness of its neighbours, the genial wit of a visitor, and the somewhat ludicrous accompaniments of his attending physician. And that he should remember these things when sixty-five years old is proof of the deep impression which they made upon his mind.

The father was very anxious that young Timothy should begin early in life to attend religious meetings, and consequently the boy went to nearly all the Methodist meetings in the neighbourhood. Sometimes he was unable to walk on account of the condition of the roads, and in such cases he would ride on his father's back for at least a mile at a time. The Methodists held their meetings in cottages, and in many instances they were greatly persecuted. There were no policemen in those days, so that every one seemed to do pretty much as he pleased. Bolton, as well as all the surrounding neighbourhood, was notoriously wicked. Indeed, "the roughs," as they were called, had everything very much their own way. Some of their conduct was innocently enough intended, but it, nevertheless, greatly annoyed the quieter citizens. These "roughs" took special pleasure in disturbing Methodist meetings. On one occasion, while the congregation were kneeling, some one fastened the front door, while another got on the roof of the house and put a slate over the chimney, so that the house was soon filled with a stifling

smoke, then a brick was dropped down the chimney, which threw the congregation into great consternation, most of the people being almost smothered, and unable to get out of the house. Both young and old seemed to be bent on doing mischief.

Speaking of those days Mr. Coop says:—

“It was not safe for any female to go out at night after dark. I remember, when I was about eleven or twelve years of age, that I used to be very much like the rest of the boys, full of all sorts of mischievous tricks. There was one thing I was very fond of doing at nights. We frequently got a prickly holly bush, and then tied a long string to it. This we would place across the road, and after everything was ready we would several of us get behind the hedge at the other side of the road, and watch for some female to come along. Just as soon as one appeared, we would draw the holly straight across the road, and, if possible, get it entangled in her dress. She would at once imagine that a hedgehog had hold of her, and scream out in great alarm. We would then run away and get into the main road, and come back to where the woman was, and begin to look for the hedgehog as if we knew nothing at all of what had happened. It was great fun for us, though the women were frequently very much frightened.”

But all this wicked tendency only augmented the sense of responsibility which the father felt in propagating his religious notions, and at the same time increased his desire to shield his son from the dangers by which he was surrounded by bringing him into religious associations. Young Timothy took all this kindly. While he was

fondly attached to childish sports, and did not fail to indulge in these to a reasonable extent, when he had opportunity, nevertheless, he followed with steadfast steps the leadings of his father in the path from which he never wholly diverged in his after life.

## CHAPTER II.

### SCHOOL DAYS AND RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

THE slight improvement in trade, and the general condition of the country, beginning with the year 1820, did not last long. During the latter part of the year 1825 there was a great financial crisis, and the distress of the people became more decided than ever. The year 1826 brought with it consternation and depression in all classes, and the feeling of despondency was so great that the public could think or speak about scarcely anything else, and even Parliament was occupied with this topic almost exclusively during the session which followed. All classes were suffering alike. The banks, owing to the numerous business failures, could hardly be prevailed on, for any reason, to make advances to their customers ; the merchants, anticipating still greater declines in prices of commodities, were exceedingly careful about entering into speculations ; the manufacturers were equally indisposed to take any risks, and in most cases contracted their operations. The result of all this was that workmen were thrown out of employment, and



were consequently reduced to extreme want ; and in this condition they vented their displeasure upon the machinery, which they imagined was the cause of their suffering.

This general distress, as usual in such cases, led to serious acts of violence, and in some instances to disastrous riots. This was specially the case in manufacturing districts. On all sides the most appalling proofs of wretchedness were afforded. The recent improvements in machinery were regarded by the working-classes as one of the causes of their distress, and, as a consequence, indignation meetings were held in many places ; and this was especially the case in Lancashire. The streets of Manchester were often crowded with these half-starved, unemployed workmen, whose sufferings were undoubtedly very great, and who seemed to be powerless to secure even a sustenance for themselves and families.

It is not surprising that, at a time like this, the father of so large a family as that of Mr. William Coop, who was himself a workman and with very limited means, could not afford to give his children even an ordinary education. But he felt the importance of education very much. His own associations had led him to see the value of it, and therefore he determined that, if he could not educate all of his children, he would at least try to educate one of them. In selecting this one, the lot fell upon Timothy, and he was accordingly started to school when he was about six years of age. This shows the

courage of the father, and also the deep interest he felt in the matter of education. Timothy's brothers were all engaged in some kind of labour, and they did not entirely relish the notion that Timothy was to be allowed a privilege which they themselves had not enjoyed. Consequently, they were in the habit of finding fault with him about his going to school, and the expense which it was entailing upon the family. Nor can anyone be surprised at this, as these boys themselves did not understand the value of education, and did not understand the necessity of having something to eat ; this last was a consideration in those days, which very few can appreciate at this time.

But even Timothy paid dearly for his high privilege of going to school. He had to work both before going in the morning and on his return at night ; and so limited were the father's means that the son was allowed only a penny per day with which to buy his midday meal. At times, the lad suffered intensely from hunger. His food at home consisted chiefly, and sometimes altogether, of oatmeal porridge, and often not one of the family tasted meat for weeks at a time. Sometimes they had the privilege of a little treacle and water, which was used with the porridge. Timothy had to walk a considerable distance to school, and could not, therefore, return for the noon meal ; but this was purchased with the penny allowed him, and consisted of a small loaf and treacle. Often when going home at nights, hungry, faint,

and in great pain, sometimes crying bitterly on account of his sufferings, his brothers would tell him to place himself in a certain attitude, as this would bring him some relief.

These facts are related not only for the purpose of giving a portraiture of the times, but also to indicate the hardships through which young Timothy secured even the limited education which he received during the six years he was in school. It must be understood that he did a very considerable amount of labour during all this time. He worked chiefly at winding bobbins. The whole family were weavers. He had to get ready enough bobbins at night to keep them going all the next day.

He had to study the Catechism at school on every Friday, and the part that made most impression on his mind was that which related to the performance of duty to neighbours and to the keeping of the tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering. These early impressions undoubtedly followed him through life, as he was always distinguished for just dealings with his neighbours, for speaking evil of no one, even when the provocation was very great.

When he had got a considerable start in his education, and was regarded as a fairly good writer, he was sent to the Wesleyan Sunday-school, where his father, who was the superintendent, wished him to assist in teaching writing. But the Wesleyans would not allow him to teach writing in the Sunday-school, so he left this and went to the Independent Methodist school,

where the teaching of writing was permitted. This question of teaching writing in the Sunday-school became a continual bone of contention between his father and the travelling preachers. His father was very religious, but was liberal in his views of the matter in controversy ; and as he regarded the importance of education with so much concern, he was not willing to refuse such instruction to the children on the Lord's Day as he believed was necessary to their best interests. He, therefore, made very earnest efforts to have writing introduced into his school, but was always overruled by the travelling preachers, notwithstanding the very general approval of the proposal by the local preachers. After a protracted contention, the father gained the day, and writing was at last permitted in the Wesleyan school. Young Timothy was then taken from the Independent Methodist school into the Wesleyan school, where he became a teacher and an active worker in all the interests of the school.

The Sunday-school soon began to prosper. The services were always of a lively character. His father was the leading singer, both in the Sunday-school and church, and continued to occupy this position as long as he lived ; in all, for forty years. The singing of the Sunday-school was an attractive feature. Soon tea parties became fashionable, and on these occasions the singing held a prominent place. There was, however, a habit introduced, which soon became very popular, and which would scarcely be regarded as orthodox in any

Sunday-school of the present day. They introduced a drink, which they called "Methodist cream," and some people became very fond of it; and as it consisted of a mixture of rum and milk, it produced in those who drank it freely a disposition which was anything but appropriate for those who professed and called themselves Christians.

But about this time the Temperance movement began to have considerable influence. Doubtless, it received a strong impulse from the reduction of duty on spirits from fifteen shillings to ten shillings a gallon, or from three-halfpence to a penny a glass. This diminution of price resulted in a large increase of the use of ardent spirits, until the drinking habits of the people became so excessive, that societies and leagues for the purpose of promoting temperance among the working classes were nearly everywhere formed, and in many parts of the country the Temperance movement met with surprising success. In fact, teetotalism had its origin about this time at Preston, which is only a short distance from where the Coops resided. Mr. Joseph Livesey was the great apostle of the teetotal movement, and during one of his campaigns through the country he came into the neighbourhood of the Coops, where he delivered a lecture on Temperance, illustrating his lecture by burning alcohol in the presence of the audience to make his plea more impressive. At that time young Timothy was about to be apprenticed and to leave home. At the close of Mr. Livesey's lecture, his father said to Timothy that he

would be glad to have him sign the pledge, as he was going from home, and this pledge would be a safeguard when he was away from parental oversight. The pledge was often then taken for a definite period, say for one, two, three, four, or five years. Young Timothy asked his father how long a time he should sign for, and the father answered, "Till your conscience tells you to break it." The lad signed with that understanding, and he kept the pledge for a number of years. But subsequently, when at a wedding, he partook of some wine, excusing himself on the ground that in doing this he simply did what the Saviour evidently approved of on a like occasion. But as soon as the wedding was over his teetotalism continued as before. This incident illustrates a peculiarity in the boy, which was afterwards prominent in the man. His reverence for the Divine Master was such that he always felt safe when he was doing what he thought the Master would approve, and when he had His approval he was not careful about what others might think of him. In this case he was severely reprimanded by his temperance friends, but all their arguments could not avail in convincing him that he had done anything that was wrong. He referred to the character of the pledge he had taken. He simply promised to abstain while his conscience approved. In what he had done there was no violation of his conscience; and as he felt confident that his Divine Lord would not condemn him, he was not inclined to listen to the reproofs of his friends. However

as he soon gave evidence that this was only a single instance of departure from his teetotal habits, the matter was forgotten by all except himself. But he occasionally referred to it in after years, as an illustration of his early fondness for that liberty which was always dearer to him than life itself.

Returning to his education again, it is well to quote some of his experiences in his own language. He says :—

“ My father and the old Methodist joiner (shuttle-maker) were my principal friends. I was in the habit of creeping into the corner to hear the Methodists sing their hymns and read the Bible, for my father’s house was a sort of headquarters for many of these pious people. Those were happy times in our home, notwithstanding all our hardships. We often had a great deal of singing, and I have never forgotten one beautiful hymn, which was a great favourite with my father,

‘ Thou soft-flowing Kedron, by thy silver stream.’

I used to sit and listen to my father and others telling tales about Bonaparte and the war, and these greatly excited me. One old soldier, by the name of Chadwick, could spin yarns at any length; and as for discussion, he was always ready and willing. He had the greatest difficulty to give up, no matter how indefensible his position might become. He undoubtedly had one quality of a good soldier, viz., that of holding on. It was at these meetings that my love of knowledge and travel began. These meetings were usually at night.

“ When I left home in the morning, I would frequently have trouble when I had gone about half way. At that point we had to pass a public-house, and there were generally a lot of coarse men

and rough boys assembled at this place. These would frighten myself and others, and often beat us. There was one very bad character, a publican's son, a strong rough fellow, who attacked us very often. Sometimes we rebelled and threw stones at them, and then ran away. There was one habit which some of the men had which raised my mettle tremendously. They would not strike or beat the boys, but they would wring their ears; and I often went home with my ears torn and bleeding. These men seemed to be filled with a real devilish spirit; they did not do it in any playful manner, but they did it because they seemed to take actual delight in giving pain. As there were no police every one did as he liked, and the consequence was a great deal of evil was done.

"I was fond of going to school, and had a good mistress, who seemed to take kindly to me, and I soon learned to read the Bible, and in a little time I was moved up into the master's class. I have never forgotten that day. I remember I was greatly elated at this promotion, and I can even now see the class standing around me reading. I remember the very psalm and the verse I read. As I was full of excitement, I read it very fast and without proper articulation. The master stormed at me, and demanded that I should read it again. His manner frightened me so much that I lost all command of myself; the schoolroom and children all began to go round and round, and the result was that I was unable to read at all. This fright injured me for life. I never got over it. After this I was never able to read in public without very great difficulty until I became a Christian, and even then I scarcely ever attempted to read without feeling some hesitation.

"In those days the teachers were not all teetotalers, and some of them were not always entirely sober. Sometimes when the master came into the school he would be in a condition that the boys called 'muzzy;' and generally, if not then, at least the



next day, he would be as 'cross as a wasp,' as the boys were accustomed to say.

"I succeeded best at writing and arithmetic, and as soon as I had made considerable progress, I began to help my friends in their lessons, and in return I got some compensation in the way of little 'knick-knacks' that would be given me. I was associated with one of the boys from a very rich family, who used to bring a great deal of 'knick-knacks' to school with him, and I was always ready to clear him out.

"There was one pleasing feature which I well remember which was a bright spot in my return journey from school. A kind old gentleman often met us, and would look at our slates and copybooks, and after speaking kindly to us would mark a word that was well written. He would then praise the writer, and begin to fumble about in his pockets for a halfpenny, which he would give to the boy whose writing he had commended. This godsend often came into my hands, and a halfpenny in those days was something to be proud of."

He left school in the year 1829. At that time a new branch of industry—viz., silk and satin weaving—was attracting considerable attention. The hand-loom cotton-weaving was going out of use, and, consequently, the father was anxious to have his son Timothy learn to weave silk. This he began immediately after leaving school. Two years after he left school, a brother who was then living in Bolton, persuaded his father to apprentice Timothy to a Wesleyan friend in Bolton who was a tailor and draper. This friend was in need of just such a boy, and his brother was of the opinion that this was a good opening. At that time Timothy was a good silk-

weaver,\* and was earning more money than kept him, and was, therefore, a great help to the family. It was a very difficult question to decide. His going away would be a great loss to his parents, but the prospect for the future was very tempting. Ultimately the father decided that he should go for at least a month on trial ; and this proved to be a trial in more ways than one. The young lad had never been much from home. He had been always fond of his parents, and had made his father a constant companion. It was now a very serious thing to break away from all the endearing associations of home, and go into a wicked town full of temptation, where he would be almost entirely among strangers, and with very few influences to either sweeten or soften the stern realities of life. Then the temptation to spend the few pence which he might have would be very great in a town like Bolton, where many things were exposed to the eyes which a country boy was most likely to covet. But the father gave his son some good counsel, and the boy entered upon his new field of adventure with longing looks towards the old homestead, but with a brave and earnest heart as regards the work before him.

He was very well pleased with the business, and also liked his master ; but the foreman made it very hard for him. He had to work incessantly, and generally at nights his strength was almost exhausted. Having no one to whom he could go for society, the only thing he could do was to go upstairs and retire to bed. He was frequently

so tired that he often crept up to his room on his hands and knees. Of this struggle he writes :—

“I had a great deal of running about to do, and often had to carry flock beds forty pounds’ or fifty pounds’ weight on my head to different parts of the town. It was very hard work, but I was not afraid to work, and really liked the business. The old master and mistress were strange characters, and very opposite in their dispositions. The master was liberal, generous, and whole-hearted ; but I cannot say much for the mistress. She was very fond of hoarding up the money ; but I got into her good graces by helping her to clear up the fireplace and carry out the ashes. For this extra work she was liberal enough to give me a penny a week, which was really something in those days. They were wealthy, but kept no servant. The wife was between seventy and eighty years old, and yet she did the housework herself ; and besides that, used to make waistcoats for the shop, and for these she got eightpence apiece. What we had to eat was very scanty and very plain. I scarcely ever had half as much to eat as I desired. The old people used to leave their crusts, being unable to eat them. These crusts were usually put in the candle-box, so that when I got very hungry I knew where to go. In this way I always had plenty of dry crusts to eat between meals, and these were better than nothing.”

When the month was up, the question then to be determined was whether he would continue or not. The terms proposed were that the father should find the boy sufficient clothes and all the pocket-money that was needed during his apprenticeship ; but when this proposal was made the father said he could not afford it, and Timothy did not wish to be a burden to his father any longer.

But his brother, who had secured him the place, offered to compromise the matter by guaranteeing to furnish the clothes if the father could not, provided Timothy would serve out his apprenticeship. But Timothy's reply was, "No, I won't do it—I will go home first. I can get ten shillings a week at weaving, and I will not put my parents to expense. I will go home." This decided the matter. He returned home and began to work with vigour, and with a mind fully made up to make money at silk-weaving, and as soon as he had secured a little capital to go into business for himself. His desire was to undertake some business, and he felt that he had the energy and tact necessary to make it a success. This was really the turning-point in his career. From that time forward his whole purpose was to qualify himself for a business career. How he succeeded we shall hereafter find out.

## CHAPTER III.

### APPRENTICED AND SETTLES AT WIGAN.

YOUNG Timothy had been at home only a few weeks when his old master came to see him, and found him busy at work. The object of the master's visit was to inform Timothy that he had taken a shop at Wigan, and that one of his sons was going to manage it, and that both of them wished Timothy to work for them at that place. Timothy agreed to the arrangement, and returned with the master that afternoon to Wigan, about six miles distant.

The following is a copy of the agreement entered into at the time :—

“ This Indenture, made the Twenty-eighth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one, between William Coop of West Houghton in the County of Lancaster, Weaver, of the first part, Timothy Coop of Wigan aforesaid, (son of the said William Coop) of the second part, and John Ackroyd of Wigan aforesaid, Shopkeeper and Cloth-dealer of the third part, Witnesseth that the said William Coop and Timothy Coop have, and each of them hath put, placed and bound, and by these presents do, and each of them doth put, place and bind the said Timothy Coop apprentice to the said John Ackroyd, to serve

him in the art, trade or business of a Shopkeeper and Cloth-dealer from the day of the date of these presents for and during the term of seven years, thence next ensuing ; during which time he, the said Timothy Coop shall and will faithfully, honestly and diligently serve his said master, his secrets keep, his lawful commands obey ; hurt to his said master he shall not do, nor suffer any to be done by others when it is in his power to prevent the same ; his master's goods he shall not waste or embezzle, the same give or lend, neither shall he absent himself from his said master's service at any time during the said term without leave first had and obtained for that purpose, but shall and will in all things behave and demean himself towards his said master and all his family as becometh a faithful apprentice during the said term. In consideration whereof he, the said John Ackroyd, doth hereby for himself, his heirs, executors and administrators covenant, promise and agree with and to the said William Coop, his executors and ~~administrators~~ that he, the said John Ackroyd, shall and will at all times during the said term, in the best manner he can teach and instruct, or cause to be properly taught and instructed the said Timothy Coop, as his apprentice in the art trade business or occupation of a Shopkeeper and Cloth-dealer, as he the said John Ackroyd now uses the same. And shall and will at all times, during the said term, find and provide for the said Timothy Coop good and wholesome food, all necessary wearing apparel, washing and comfortable lodging in the dwelling-house of him, the said John Ackroyd. In witness whereof the said parties to these presents have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first before written.

“ WILLIAM COOP.

“ TIMOTHY COOP.

“ JOHN ACKROYD.

“Signed sealed and delivered by the said parties in my presence,

“ W. ACTON, Attorney, Wigan.”

This is endorsed at the end of the apprenticeship as follows :—

“ May 28th, 1838.—To all whom it may concern. The bearer of these indentures, Timothy Coop, has served me for the space of seven years in the most faithful, honest, and upright manner possible, four years of which he was sol<sup>e</sup> manager of a shop in a distant town, which he managed perfectly to my satisfaction.

“ JOHN ACKROYD.”

The foregoing document is not only interesting as a reminiscence of the past, but the endorsement on it clearly indicates how satisfactorily the services had been performed.

Young Timothy and the son referred to had just begun to get fairly to work at Wigan, when they were unexpectedly disturbed by the landlord. They had taken the shop from a sub-tenant, not dreaming that there would be any difficulty about holding it. However, at the end of five months the landlord wished to know something of their politics, and when they told him they were Liberals, he said they could not have his shop at the rate they were paying, and, consequently, they would have to leave at the end of their time, or else pay double rent. This they at once resented, but as there was no other shop to be had at Wigan they were compelled to go to another town. So they continued to work in the shop they had until twelve o'clock on the Saturday night before the Monday on which they had to leave by noon. They showed their energy and pluck by getting up at

midnight,\* and during the twelve hours left to them, packed up everything and moved to Rochdale, twenty-two miles distant, where they had secured a shop suitable for their purposes. Young Timothy was happy in his business, and soon began to like the town of Rochdale very much.

He was about this time greatly disturbed in reference to his soul. As we have already seen, his religious training had been carefully attended to by his father, and he had frequently manifested considerable interest in religious matters. But he had never thought very seriously about his own condition. He had worked in the Sunday-school, and had felt a deep interest in religious teaching, but he had failed to appreciate his own condition until he began to work at Rochdale. Here he indulged in much introspection and reflection. He not only read the Bible, but studied it. He had previously been simply interested in the salvation of others, but he now became sensibly concerned about his own salvation. He became conscious of sin, and of his lost condition, and for a considerable time was in a very miserable state of mind. He joined the Wesleyan Society, but could not find peace. In this condition he remained for months, but he at last determined to go and hear what were called the "Ranters." He found the meetings of these Primitive Methodists much more lively and emotional, and after a little while he seemed to find that for which he had been seeking. When he had



reached something like an assurance of acceptance with God, he wrote it on the wall in his bedroom where he was accustomed to go for private prayer.

But his rest did not continue long. He had sought for peace in the excitement of the emotional nature, and, when he found it, it proved to be a variable quantity, just as the emotional nature is. He had studied his Bible, but had interpreted the whole Gospel message in the light of the habits and customs of religious society about him, rather than in the light of the primitive cases of conversion as recorded in the New Testament. The result was he soon drifted into doubts again. Nor did this reaction stop here. He began to go in the paths of sin, and on one occasion he went into a public-house for a few moments, but while there the thought of his father's frequent counsel to him against the use of intoxicating drinks, and his own pledge, came to his mind, and he immediately ran out of the public-house, deeply ashamed of himself. Now his distress became almost unbearable. His going into the public-house was on a Sunday afternoon, and not knowing what to do with himself after leaving the house, he almost unconsciously drifted into the Methodist Chapel in the evening, where he thought every person was staring at him. This only increased his distress of mind. At last his feelings became wrought up to an extent which he had never before experienced. He realised himself in a horrible state, and for a time became almost desperate. He

prayed, but his prayers seemed not to reach the ear of the Divine Father. After some time, however, he became more peaceful, and again gave himself heartily to Christian work.

During these days he was in the habit of frequently walking to Bolton, about ten miles distant. One day while he was there the eldest son of Mr. Ackroyd, while talking to his father, became greatly excited, and finally passed some angry words. Young Timothy was horrified at this conduct of the son, and so outraged were the father's feelings that he refused to forgive his son, and never did forgive him till the day of his death. This incident is mentioned mainly to show the ground of the dissolution of partnership which soon followed. The firm was then Ackroyd and Sons, Bolton and Wigan. A few months transpired before the final dissolution could be effected. During this time the parties concerned were in a high state of excitement, and young Timothy was claimed first by one party and then by the other. Sometimes, at only a moment's notice, he would have to leave Bolton and go to Rochdale, walking the entire ten miles; and then, after remaining there a few days, he would have to walk back again to Bolton. Meantime, the partners who were contending with each other were trying to get all the money they could, and of course each one young Timothy was with used him as far as possible to attain this end.

At last, however, an agreement of dissolution was

signed, and one of the conditions was that the man to whom Timothy had been apprenticed would allow him to remain with the son, and manage the shop at Rochdale. This agreement was entered into without the consent of either Timothy or his father, and was, therefore, wholly illegal. When Timothy's father heard that his son had been placed with the young man who had been angry with his father, he refused utterly to give his consent to the arrangement; nevertheless, he was anxious that Timothy should serve out his apprenticeship with the one to whom he was bound; consequently, he was not willing for his son to surrender his position, though he was legally released. However, the whole matter resulted in a law-suit, which was finally settled by arbitration, and an award of £40 per annum was made to the brother who chided his father, and this was to continue during the time of Timothy's apprenticeship. But this did not settle the question, nor was it settled until Timothy's father summoned his master, and compelled him to teach Timothy the business according to contract.

Timothy remained at Rochdale about two years, and while there, an incident occurred which shows the spirit of the boy, which was afterwards so prominent a characteristic of his spirit when he became a full-grown man. One day his father came over to see him. This was after the illegal agreement had been signed in which Timothy was transferred to the other brother. The father came to make some arrangement about the matter, as he was

anxious to avoid any unpleasantness. He and young Mr. Ackroyd were talking over the matter privately in the sitting-room, when Timothy overheard some words which, to use his own language, indicated that "a storm was brewing." He heard his master saying, "There is the door, and you can leave." With that Mr. William Coop left the room, but Timothy was so outraged at the conduct of his master that he jumped over the counter, and said he would go too if his father went. At this the master came rushing into the shop, and they at once had a severe tussle together; Timothy threw him on his back and left him there, and went out of the shop with his father; and as he had left without either coat or hat, he called upon a friend and borrowed a jacket and cap, and immediately took his departure from Rochdale with his father, the two walking all the way to Bolton.

In 1835 a shop was again opened in Wigan, and he took entire control of the business. And as this town afterwards became the centre of his business career, and as hereafter it will be identified most intimately with Mr. Coop's history, it may be well to give some account of the interesting old place, not only because of its associations with the subject of this memoir, but also because of the interest which attaches to the place itself, and the help it will give in understanding the peculiar environment of Mr. Coop during the after years of his life.

The town of Wigan is one of the oldest towns in England. There are some who believe it to be identical

with the ancient Coccio. Its present name is of uncertain derivation, though the various guesses are not without considerable interest. One notion is that it is a contraction of Wibiggin, which in Saxon means "little buildings," and that it received this name because of the extreme smallness of the rudely-thatched huts which formed the homes of its inhabitants. Another notion is that the name is a form of Wye-gan, made up of the words gan, "to go to," and wye, "a place of safety." Two other derivations are suggested, each of which regards the Saxon Wyg or Wig (fight) as the more important element in the word. The first of these would make Wigan a derivation of Wig-ham; and the second would derive it from Wigen, the latter being the Saxon plural form of Wig.

An ancient tradition associates the name of the famous King Arthur with Wigan. According to this tradition, at least two of his renowned battles against the Saxons were fought on the banks of the Douglas (the ancient Dhu-glas), which flows through Wigan. However, there need not be much importance attached to these traditions in order to make out an interesting history for the old town, in which Mr. Coop lived and laboured so long, for there are plenty of historical reminiscences which cannot fail to interest the general reader, as well as those who are intimately associated with the place.

There can be no doubt that in the ninth century, when the Danes descended upon Chester, they fought a battle in the neighbourhood of Wigan, and it may be that the

large number of horses and men whose bones were exhumed there about the year 1741 fell in the fight which took place during the reign of King Alfred.

The town was first incorporated in the reign of Henry I., and the first time it returned members to Parliament was during the reign of Edward I. But it did not long retain, uninterruptedly, either its corporate rights or its franchise. Both of these were lost and afterwards restored. In the reign of Henry VIII. the town is said to have been a paved town, inhabited by "summe Marchauntes, sum Artificers, sum Fermers." A Mr. Bradshawe was deriving a considerable income from "canal coal," as it was then called, which he found "in his Grounde." In Elizabeth's reign the inns of Wigan appear to have been held in high repute. One enthusiastic admirer of them announced that there "each commor was sure to lie in clean sheets, wherein no man hath been lodged since they came from the landresse." Many a modern traveller would like to feel quite sure that the hotel bed-linen had really come direct from the "landresse," and had not simply been damped and passed through a mangle. And he, perhaps, would be as enthusiastic as the admirer of ancient Wigan inns if, like him, he could report that if he travelled on horseback his bed cost him nothing, and that if he came on foot to the hotel he had to pay only a penny a day. And it is, perhaps, true also that the modern traveller will be encouraged by the reputation of Wigan to make the place a visit, in order to see if he could not succeed

in influencing the innkeepers there to teach the secret of their cleanly rooms and excellent accommodations to the provincial towns generally throughout the United Kingdom. Or it may be that these inns are not now what they once were, and if such is the case, we trust that these references to the traditions of the ancient town will encourage a return to the ancient order of things.

During the Elizabethan period, Wigan was much agitated by the struggle between Popery and Protestantism. Its rector most energetically endeavoured to free the magisterial bench from those who were tainted with Romish heresies, and, consequently, throughout the parish Popish recusants were sternly dealt with.

In the struggle between King Charles I. and his Parliament, the Wiganers displayed a spirit of entire devotion to the throne. Some of the first blood in the great rebellion was shed by the Wigan contingent, which marched against Manchester, under the command of Lord Derby. Indeed, from that day to this Wigan has been intensely loyal to the Crown, and has generally returned Members of Parliament who were most favourable to established institutions.

During the contest between the Cavaliers and Roundheads, a body of the first marched from Wigan against a party of the last. These Cavaliers, after defeating their enemies, returned homewards. Entering Hindley Chapel, which stood at a short distance outside Wigan, they played cards in the pews, and when they left they

carried away the Bible. When they reached Wigan they tore up the Sacred Book and stuck its leaves on posts in various parts of the town, saying, as they did so, "This is the Roundheads' Bible."

In the following year the Wigan army besieged Preston on two occasions, but both times was driven back. The Preston men retaliated and were more successful. On April 1st, 1643, they stormed Wigan and razed its walls and ramparts to the ground, lest the fortunes of war should once more place it in the hands of the king. During this struggle the energies of the Wiganers had been so absorbed in war that the commerce of the town had been almost entirely neglected. Business came practically to a standstill, and, in consequence, poverty reigned everywhere. Famine and pestilence prevailed, the distress becoming so marked that a parliamentary enquiry was instituted, and a public collection was made throughout the country on behalf of the inhabitants on the very day appointed by Cromwell for general thanksgiving. As an evidence of the condition of things, it may be said that oats at that time cost £4 a bushel, and wheat fifty-three shillings and fourpence per quarter. But to realise the significance of this, it is necessary to take into account the change which has taken place in the purchasing power of money and in the rate of wages. As one has strikingly put it, "A bushel of the national food cost what was then a poor man's half-a-year's wages."

In 1648 a great battle took place at Preston between



Cromwell and the Royalists. The latter were completely routed, and fled in confusion to Wigan. The curfew-bell had tolled before they entered the Standish Gate. The Parliamentarians had followed the defeated Royalists, but did not enter the town. In their terror, however, the Royalists imagined that the Roundheads had entered, and consequently, during the night, there was a fierce encounter between some of the Royalists and their friends, each mistaking the other for enemies. The next morning those who were still alive marched off to Warrington, followed by Cromwell's men. The Royalist army then made an effort to re-capture Wigan. This effort was led by Lord Derby, but, after a desperate engagement, which is known as the Battle of Wigan Lane, his army was completely routed, and he himself escaped only by disguising himself.

For a while Wigan seemed to be loyal to its new rulers. But it is evident that the hearts of the inhabitants were still true to the throne, for at the general election of 1661 every voice in the borough was raised in favour of the king.

In the rebellion of 1745, Prince Charles Edward, the young Pretender, passed twice through Wigan. On the first occasion he was on his way to Manchester, and on the second was returning thither. At about the same period the Reverend John Wesley visited Wigan, and preached with great success to the colliers.

The most interesting building in Wigan is the parish

church. • It is built in the late Perpendicular style, and is probably of Saxon origin. By far the larger portion of the present edifice is modern, but parts of the ancient structure may be seen at the base of the massive tower, and in the adjoining family chapel of the Gerards or Walmsleys.

Within the church is an ancient monument, with which an interesting story is associated. The monument itself forms a tomb. On its summit are placed two stone figures, one that of a knight clad in a coat of mail, who lies cross-legged with his partly-drawn sword on his left side ; the other that of a veiled lady, who lies in a flowing robe, with her hands lifted up and joined together as if she were engaged in prayer. The two figures represent Sir William Bradshaigh and his Lady Mabel. It is said that Sir William was a soldier, who for many years was engaged in warfare in distant countries. Hearing nothing of him his wife concluded he was dead, and after a while consented to marry a Welsh knight. Some time after her second marriage Sir William returned, and, clothed in a palmer's habit, visited the poor inhabitants of his native village. His wife met him. Noticing a resemblance to her first husband she began to weep, and awoke the jealousy of her new lord. The latter cruelly chastised her. The former made himself known to his tenants, who lost no time in communicating the intelligence to the Welsh knight. As soon as he heard it he fled, but was overtaken and slain. Dame Mabel was instructed by her

father confessor to do penance for the sin of having married again while her first husband was living ; and in performance of this she went once every week, barefooted and barelegged, from her home at Haigh Hall, a distance of over two miles, to a cross near Wigan, which still stands at the top of Standish Gate, at the entrance to the town from Standish road.

The living of Wigan has always been regarded as a prize by the clerical aspirants after good incomes. Among those who have held it three must be mentioned. The first of them is John Mauncell, who must be regarded as one of the most remarkable pluralists. For while he held the living he was "provost of Beverley, treasurer of York, parson of Maidstone in Kent, chief justice of England, chaplain to the king, and ambassador to Spain." This clergyman evidently believed in militant Christianity, for he engaged in a battle between the English and French near to Tailborge in France, and took one prisoner with his own hands. We call attention to another because of one incident in his career, which shows how dangerous an enemy to the State a Romish clergyman may be. Preaching in the Wigan parish church in 1323, Robert de Cliderhow promised to give plenary absolution to all who should assist the Earl of Lancaster in the Barons' Wars. A third of the rectors of Wigan distinguished himself as an enthusiastic moral reformer. This was John Fleetwood, who, finding that there were in Wigan twenty-one vagrant priests, and twenty-five no-

torious houses for them, and that the morals of the people were as low as those of the priests, devoted himself most zealously to the suppression of impurity, gambling, and the extremely early marriages which were frequently taking place.

Some of the finest old halls of Lancashire are in the neighbourhood of Wigan. Among these may be mentioned Ince Hall, Crook Hall, Haigh Hall, Duxbury Hall, and Standish Hall.

The last-named is rendered specially interesting by the fact that it was here that Miles Standish, of the *Mayflower*, was born. To the same family, too, belonged Rose Standish, the first English settler who died on American shores, with reference to whom "Miles Standish the Puritan Captain" is represented by Longfellow as saying :

"Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies buried Rose Standish,  
Beautiful rose of love that bloomed for me by the wayside !  
She was the first to die of all who came in the *Mayflower*."

Standish Hall is said to be the place where the Gunpowder Plot was hatched.

Wigan has owed most of its prosperity to its great coalfield, which extends for miles in every direction, and is the best worked coalfield known. Several million tons of coal are extracted annually. The Arley mine is one of the deepest in the British Isles. The shaft of Rosebridge colliery is about 2,500 feet deep.

A visitor to Wigan will be struck with the appearance of the women who work at the pits. It is a strange sight

to see them as they return home from their work, begrimed with coal-dust, carrying their dinner-baskets and their cans. Their dress is very singular, but very suitable for their employment. They wear strong trousers and wooden clogs. Over their trousers they wear gowns which, while they are at work, are tucked clean up before, to the waist, and hang down behind them in a peaked tail. Their heads are covered with blue handkerchiefs, or limp bonnets tied under the chin.

In addition to the mining trade Wigan carries on cotton-spinning and other industries. Several of the mills here are among the largest in the kingdom. There are iron and brass foundries, railway, waggon, bolt, screw, and iron works, and oil and grease works.

Situated as it is eighteen miles from the port of Liverpool, where the cargoes of cotton, etc., are landed, and nineteen miles from the city of Manchester, where the manufactured goods are disposed of, and possessing an unequalled supply of fuel and an adequate supply of water, Wigan has easily risen to the front rank among the manufacturing towns of England.

At the last census the population of the town was 48,192. It has now risen to over 50,000, and is the centre of a population of 150,000.

Such is a brief sketch of one of the most interesting old towns in Lancashire, and it was in this town that Mr. Coop finally settled, and began properly his business career.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EXPERIENCES AND ASPIRATIONS.

YOUNG Timothy was now eighteen years old, was well developed physically, had a very good education compared with most young men of his class, and had already gone through an experience which had taught him not only self-reliance, but reliance upon Him Who is the source of all blessing. He entered upon his new position with enthusiasm. He thoroughly understood the business in which he was engaged, and he thought he saw in the small beginning an outcome which was quite inspiring to his young heart. He was very enterprising, but withal cautious in his movements. He was anxious to make progress, but was willing to wait for the right time to move. In a word, he was courageous to a large degree for one of his age, but this was tempered by a prudence which was always a safeguard against any rash action. Indeed, he was a wise, thoughtful, manly young fellow, with generous aspirations prompting him and a noble ideal before him.

Though the opportunities for success in business were

by no means promising at that period, still, the hard times, to which attention has already been called, were by this time somewhat modified. The monetary crisis was now fairly over, and in the year 1835-6 there was a temporary revival of trade. During the years from 1825-31 the public discontent and suffering became so great that these at length found vent in the Reform revolution. And no less important were the effects of an opposite set of causes, in producing the feverish prosperity of 1835-6, terminating, as the natural consequence, in the long-continued depression of 1837-42. There were causes which operated in the first of these years in retaining the gold in the nation, and in inducing a high though fleeting degree of social welfare. There had been four fine seasons in succession, and the consequence was the importation of wheat was reduced to practically nothing, and, so far as the chief food of the people was concerned, the country had become self-supporting. This had the effect of stopping altogether the drain of the precious metals, which arises from the necessity of paying for large importations of food in gold or silver. At the same time, the reduced price of provisions increased the supply available for either purpose in the hands of the middle and working classes, so much as to communicate a fresh and very important impulse both to foreign commerce and domestic manufactures.

It will be seen that in the very year in which young Coop located at Wigan, there was a more hopeful outlook

for business than had been for many years before ; and the fact that this hope was completely obscured by another commercial depression, lasting from 1837 to 1842, only intensifies our interest in the enterprising young firm which had been launched in Wigan. The rent of the shop was only £16 16s. per annum, and yet the firm of Ackroyd & Co. was the largest in the clothing trade in that part of the country. At first young Coop lived in lodgings, but this style was not in harmony with what he considered becoming in the manager of such a prominent business house as he represented. He, therefore, thought he ought to live somewhat in a style commensurate with his position. Consequently, he looked out and found a small cottage very near to the shop, containing two rooms, one on the ground floor and one bedroom, the rent of which was £3 10s. a year. This cottage he took at once, and then the next question was to secure a house-keeper. The firm, besides paying rent, rates, and taxes, agreed to allow him 12s. a week for housekeeping, and he was to have all he could save out of that sum. He finally succeeded in securing the services of a young man who was a leader in the Wesleyan prayer-meeting, and who had served some time as a grocer, and was then having £15 a year; but as this sum was scarcely sufficient to meet his pressing wants, he was quite willing to entertain a more liberal proposition. Young Coop offered to give him £20 a year, and also his board and lodging. He proved to be a good cook, neat and cleanly in all of



his housekeeping work, and, as a consequence,<sup>o</sup>they got on well together.

It may be proper to note the spirit of liberality which young Coop manifested in this arrangement. He himself was allowed simply £31 4s. a year, and out of this he gave his housekeeper £20, leaving only £11 4s. for providing food for two of them. Of course this was not sufficient to meet all the requirements, and consequently it was difficult to manage on this small sum. But he was not working for the present. He had a long look ahead, and was willing to deny himself of any immediate gain in order that he might the better prepare himself for his life-work. However, this incident is but one of many which go to show how careful he was to regard the wellbeing of others. And this development of generosity is precisely what would be reasonably expected by those who knew Mr. Coop in the later years of his life.

Some time after this the firm added 2s. a-week to the 12s. which they at first allowed him, and this at once increased his ambition to secure a house a little more in harmony with his notions. He found what suited him, but for this house he had to pay £4 a year. As his housekeeper had considerable spare time, it was suggested that he might do something to earn a little money. Young Coop felt that, in order to meet his present expenses, it was impossible to save any money out of the small amount allowed him, and yet he was anxious to put by as much as possible every year, in

order that he might have something with which to go into business for himself when the proper time had come. He told his housekeeper all this, and urged him to co-operate in an earnest effort to make something in order that they might save a little. At that time the firm were selling linen bed-ticks, and had to pay 4s. each for making them. So young Coop suggested to his man-housekeeper that he might learn to sew and make bed-ticks, and so be able to earn something in that way. At the same time, his housekeeper suggested that something might be saved out of the housekeeping by cutting down expenses, and when young Timothy proposed to divide equally between them what was saved, he was surprised to find that the housekeeper actually saved 5s. a week. Young Coop kept a private account of all money received and how it was spent, and in all of his books, wherein entries are made, may be found on one side "pinch money," 2s. 6d.; on the other, a penny a week for class-money, and 1s. a quarter for class-ticket, besides other contributions to benevolent purposes. And when it is remembered that he was at this time an apprentice without salary, and paid £20 a year for his housekeeper, and had to support himself and housekeeper out of the remaining paltry sum that was allowed him, it will be seen how carefully he must have watched where every penny went in order to make both ends meet. But it will be further noted, to his great credit, that, notwithstanding his scanty means, he began thus early the habit of systematic giving, and though his

benevolence appears altogether out of proportion to the amount of his income, it was doubtless true with him, as with every other person who has manifested the same spirit, that his liberality in the long run proved to be the best investment which he made.

Some time afterwards, the Methodists began to talk about building a new chapel. With this object in view a meeting was called, but young Coop was not invited, as no one supposed he was able to help much. A number of the well-to-do members gave large sums, the largest being £15, but most of the sums ranged from £5 to £10. Young Coop was, perhaps, as little able to give as anyone connected with the church, and yet when he was solicited he promised to give £10. It is difficult to see how he could have paid this, had it not been for the kindness of his old master, who about this time came over from Bolton to see how things were getting on. He was told about the Methodist meeting which had been held to raise money for building the new chapel, and that young Coop had not been invited. He asked young Coop what he had promised to give, and was told that he had promised £10. At this the old gentleman looked pleased, though he was evidently somewhat concerned as to how young Coop would be able to make the payment. After a moment's reflection, however, he said to young Coop, "I will give the £10, and will put £50 more to your £10, making you to give £60." Young Coop objected, and told him he would feel ashamed if this were done ; but the old gentleman insisted

it should be as he had intimated, and at once authorised him to take the amount out of the business and put it into the bank, so that it would be ready for use when he wanted it. This was accordingly done, and at the next meeting of the church young Coop was invited to be present. The time of the meeting, however, was largely taken up in squabbling about the different sites which were under consideration, and some of the better class would only give on condition that the site they wished should be selected. Young Coop suggested that they should begin at once and get some money, at least enough for what he called "a nest-egg," and then they could see what site would be most desirable, in view of the amount of money they had to expend. But no one would agree to pay cash down. During the discussion young Coop said nothing about the money which he had to contribute, as he saw very clearly that no one was prepared to do anything unless he had everything his own way. This disgusted the young and enterprising manager of Ackroyd & Co., and, consequently, he kept his secret to himself, and returned home, not investing his £60 in the new Methodist chapel enterprise. Eventually, the whole project fell through, and then it was agreed to take the money out of the bank and put it back into the business.

From this time the business prospered, and the shop soon became entirely too small. There was another shop to let just opposite. As soon as this was observed, young Coop sent word to Mr. Ackroyd to come over

from Bolton and look into the matter of taking these premises. Mr. Ackroyd came as desired, and when he returned again to the shop he stated that he had bought the empty shop, the one next to it, and the public-house called "The Old Dog." This was the oldest public-house in Wigan. King Charles had occasionally stopped there, and during one night slept there. One part of the house was devoted to a barber's shop, and there was a sign in the corner as follows :—

"What do you think  
I'll shave you for nothing  
And give you some drink.

Read this again and put your stops right."

When Mr. Ackroyd told what he had done, his young manager was considerably concerned as to the step that had been taken, and distinctly stated that he could not, and would not, collect the rent for the public-house, as he was conscientiously opposed to the whole drink traffic, and could not, therefore, collect revenue of any kind derived from such a source. This incident aptly illustrates that the intense conscientiousness and courage of the young man, to which attention has already been called, were only growing with his growth and strengthening with his strength. And in order to appreciate the force of this illustration, it will be necessary to remember the position which young Coop held, as simply the manager of the firm of Ackroyd & Co., without having any responsibility for the personal transactions

of any member of the firm ; and besides this, it must be remembered also that the cause of temperance in those days had not made such headway as it has since. It required a very strong devotion to principle, and a very considerable amount of earnestness in the cause, to enable anyone to stand on a point such as has been indicated ; but just such incidents as the one related help us to measure the real character of the young man, who would sacrifice his position rather than handle money that had been polluted with what he considered criminal associations.

This purchase of Mr. Ackroyd gave considerable trouble. The vendor wanted to repudiate the bargain. He had found a publican who wanted to purchase "The Old Dog," and had actually sold it to him for a larger sum than Mr. Ackroyd had agreed to give. A law-suit was threatened, and was only avoided by the intercession of young Coop. He suggested that the publican should be allowed to have "The Old Dog," provided Mr. Ackroyd could retain the two shops and the King Charles room. This arrangement was effected by the publican paying to Mr. Ackroyd £200. more than he (Mr. Ackroyd) had agreed to pay to the original vendor ; while the King Charles room, which was desired for a shop, was let to Ackroyd & Co. on a lease at £16 per annum. The result of the whole matter was that Ackroyd & Co. got the shop on lease and cleared £200

With these new premises young Coop began to realise

something of his business ideal. While he was yet simply manager with a very small income, he was, nevertheless, conscious that he was now laying the foundation of his future business career. He devoted himself assiduously to organising, developing, and extending the trade of the firm. Already this was far ahead of any other firm of the kind in the district, and each year seemed to bring renewed prosperity. All this encouraged the young man, who was the sole manager. He saw that step by step the business was increasing, and that large success was probable in the near future. Without considering the matter of his own personal interests, he threw all his energies into his work, and soon became master of the whole situation.

He was now only twenty-four years of age, and yet he had already had a large experience, and was in fact regarded by all who knew him as one of the rising young men of Wigan. He was by no means self-seeking, and took little prominent part at that time in public affairs. He had made up his mind to be a business man, and, consequently, he gave nearly all his attention to his business affairs. Nevertheless, he was frequently consulted, even at this early age, with regard to many important public matters. But he was for the most part known for his uprightness, business capacity, and benevolence, though, as a Wesleyan and as an ardent advocate of temperance, he was not unknown in religious and social reform circles.

About this time the whole country was in a most hopeless condition. Five bad seasons in succession had nearly doubled the price of food, and augmented immensely the actual importation from abroad in comparison with what it was in 1836-37. The price of wheat was sixty-two shillings per quarter, and even went up as high as seventy-two shillings; while in 1836 it was thirty-nine shillings. And these high prices were not in any way helped to the manufacturing classes by a proportional high wage. Indeed, wages were much less than they had been, and the result was a very widespread distress among the labouring classes. Alison says, in his "History of Europe," that the winters 1841-42 and 1842-43 were the most melancholy ever known in English history, and the only comforting feature in the case was the noble patience and resignation with which their sufferings were borne by the poor.

It was at just such a time, and under such circumstances, that Mr. Coop occupied the responsible position of manager in the firm of Ackroyd & Co., and it was precisely during this discouraging period that he was planning and arranging to extend his business in every possible direction. While others were cast down, and some entirely destroyed, he was hopefully struggling against all the contending elements, and laying the foundation of the remarkable clothier's establishment in Wigan which has since become so intimately and honourably associated with his name.



## CHAPTER V.

### RECEIVES NEW RELIGIOUS LIGHT.

FROM the time when Mr. Coop settled in Wigan in 1835, to about the year 1841, he was connected with the Wesleyan Society at that place; was a teacher in the Sunday-school, and became an active prayer-leader and secretary. In this sphere he had ample scope for religious work, and, being zealously disposed, he threw himself into every department of labour allotted to him with an enthusiasm which commanded the highest respect of all who were connected with the Society. He found much joy in his work, and also much sorrow. At times he was very happy, but at other times he was quite doubtful as to the reality of his own conversion. The cause of his gloomy moods he tried to keep from his associates, and succeeded in most cases to his satisfaction. However, he himself knew the cause of this despondency, and he at once set about with earnest purpose to study the Word of God. So far he had given little attention to any earnest investigation as to what that Word said as regards salvation. His employers, relatives, and associates were all Wesleyans. His father, as has

already been seen, was a leading spirit in that body, and greatly beloved by all who knew him. He did not confine his good work to the particular body with which he was identified, but was in many respects a public benefactor, and was consequently universally esteemed. The father had been a great help to the son. There had constantly existed the most intimate relations between them. The father had been studiously careful of his son's religious education, and the son had accepted with reverential trust every word the father spoke to him. Hence the young man was practically, from a religious point of view, the product of the father's teaching. Indeed, the son had trusted the father's instruction rather than the Word of God. Consequently, when the son looked into the Book for himself, he was surprised to find that some of the teaching there did not seem to correspond with the teaching which he had so constantly received, and in which he had so implicitly believed. He found, furthermore, that he had been trusting too much to his feelings, and that when these feelings were influenced by different things they became as variable as the things themselves. In other words, he began to realise that his *assurance* of pardon was not an explicit or definite statement of the Word of God, but a sort of conviction that God had spoken peace to his soul, without knowing precisely on what this conviction was founded or how it had ever come about. Very soon this desponding state became quite serious.

About this time his father, whom he had always trusted, and from whom he had received so much help and comfort, fell a victim to the very sympathy which had made him so popular among his fellow-men. A poor neighbour had a bad hand, and mortification set in. The family physician lived at Bolton, and could not attend the case, so he sent word to young Coop's father to attend his patient. The father dressed the hand twice a day, and, much to the astonishment of the whole village, the patient recovered; but shortly after he found a little scratch on his own hand, which gave him at first only slight pain, but gradually grew worse, until death was the result. His disease was pronounced to be blood-poisoning. Young Coop was sent for, and reached his father's bed only a short time before he died. At the last interview an old friend called to see the dying man, and read to him the thirty-seventh Psalm. While reading the last verse, "The Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will He withhold," at the word "withhold" the old man raised himself in the bed, and said, "But mark the last clause—'to those that walk uprightly.'"

These were the last words that his son remembered to have heard him utter, and they made a deep impression upon the son's mind. He felt more than ever before that he should be honest and walk uprightly if he was to expect the favour of the Lord. His father's death affected him very much, and led him still further to examine the Scriptures as to what really constitutes a



HOUSE IN WHICH MR. COOP WAS BORN AND HIS FATHER DIED.



Christian. But all his investigations seemed only to make him doubt more and more, without bringing him any relief. He became quite satisfied that something was wrong, but he was not sure what it was, nor did he see any clear way out of the difficulty. His anxiety only increased with his earnest seeking after truth. But so far he had made very little progress, except becoming dissatisfied with the evidence of his own conversion ; and yet at times he was disposed to rely upon the old assurances, which once gave him great satisfaction.

While in this somewhat doubtful state of mind, a commercial traveller from Huddersfield, by the name of William Haigh, called at the shop on business. After the business had been transacted he began to talk to young Coop upon religious matters. This pleased the young man very much, for he was in exactly the frame of mind which welcomed every ray of light on religious subjects. He had a deeply religious nature, and, as has already been seen, had had a very careful religious training ; and it is not strange that he was therefore very much interested in all religious questions, and especially, such questions as those introduced by Mr. Haigh. As this conversation marks a new era in Mr. Coop's career, it will perhaps be better if the history of the case should be given in his own words.

Mr. Coop in his notes says :—

“After some general conversation, Mr. Haigh put a very pointed question to me. He said, ‘ Mr. Coop, how do you know

that your sins are forgiven?' I felt sure that I could answer this without much difficulty; at least, I could answer it according to the way I had learned to answer it. I had often given my experience in class-meetings, and also on more public occasions, and I felt sure that I could give an intelligent account of myself according to the training I had received. I liked the straightforward way in which the question was put, so I at once replied by saying, 'I know that my sins are forgiven from my experience; at the time of my conversion I was conscious of a decided change in my desires, habits, and feelings. I felt sure that I had passed from death unto life; I had repented and forsaken my evil ways.' He replied by saying, 'All this is well enough, but you have still failed to answer my question. I want to know how you *know* your sins are forgiven?' 'Well,' I replied, 'we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.' But he still insisted that his question was not answered. He called my attention to the fact that there were two points involved in it: first, the forgiveness of sins; and second, the knowledge or assurance of such forgiveness. Now he wanted me to stick to the question. The references I had made he regarded as irrelevant, and did not meet either one of the points involved. Forgiveness of sins was one thing, and change of heart another. Change of heart, change of desires, change of habits, change of feelings, might all be necessary as antecedent conditions of forgiveness, but the remission of sins should never be confounded with these antecedent conditions. His question, he insisted, had to do with the simple matter of forgiveness, and he wanted to know what my assurance was that God had forgiven my sins. I then quoted Romans viii. 16: 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' He answered, 'Yes, that is all true,' but that Scripture applies to those who are already forgiven, and not to those who are seeking forgiveness. And then that must not be understood in the sense in which

you seem<sup>e</sup> to understand it. The Spirit of God does not bear testimony *to* our spirits, but *with* our spirits, and, therefore, simply corroborates the testimony of our own spirits that we are God's children.' I then replied, 'But the Word of God says, "He that believeth shall be saved," and this I think is clear testimony. As I am sure that I believe, I am sure also that I am saved, for "he that believeth shall be saved!"' 'But,' he said, 'are you sure that the Word of God says any such thing?' I answered, 'Yes, I have no doubt of it.' 'You rely on the passage then, do you?' 'Yes, on that and many others like it.' 'But,' said he, 'I am not aware that there is such a passage in the Bible. Perhaps you would not mind finding it.' I went straight out of the shop for my Bible, and began to look for the text, but could not find it. After I had looked for a considerable time he pulled his Bible out of his pocket, and began to read from Mark xvi. 16: 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.' 'Yes,' said I, 'that is the text I was looking for.' 'Very well,' said he, 'will you be good enough to read the passage yourself?' I began to read it: 'He that believeth, *and is baptized*'—I paused—'*and is baptized*.' I paused again, and looked at it for some time; then said, '*Baptized*—what does it mean?' At that time I did not know baptism had anything to do with religion. I thought it was simply christening, and I had understood that I had been christened when I was an infant. He now said to me, 'Have you been baptized?' Remembering that I had been christened, and that I had always regarded this as baptism, I answered, 'Yes.' 'Very well, then,' said he, 'but have you *believed* and been baptized?' I paused again. I never saw that before. I asked myself the question, 'What does it mean?' and then I asked him, 'What does it mean?' He answered, 'Why undoubtedly it means just what it says. You know Jesus was baptized, and He commanded all His disciples to be baptized. When He gave his commission to the Apostles, He told them to



go and disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.' He then went on to speak of the binding obligation of this command upon all believers. He clearly showed that *believer*, according to Mark, is the same as *disciple*, according to Matthew; and that in both baptism necessarily follows, according to the instruction of our Divine Lord.

"I was dumbfounded. I never had thought seriously about the matter before. I had, for some considerable time, been distressed with doubts about my conversion, but I never understood that baptism had anything to do with the matter. Mr. Haigh then went on to say that baptism also had a specific design. It was not a mere arbitrary command. It had a wise purpose, and was intended to meet an important requirement in the plan of salvation. Its specific purpose was to give the assurance of the remission of sins, and hence Peter told the Pentecostians to repent and be baptized every one of them, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 'Now,' said he, 'the word *saved* in the commission, as recorded by Mark, means practically the same as remission of sins in Peter's answer to the Pentecostians; consequently, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, or pardoned—*i.e.*, whoever sincerely believes in Jesus Christ with all his heart, and turns away from his sins, and is baptized, receives the pardon of his past sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

"At this point our conversation closed; but I was not disposed to give the matter up. The whole view of the case was entirely new, and I was undoubtedly very much interested in what had been said. But now my early prejudices began to assert themselves, and I determined to find the passage which I had first set out to find, *viz.*, 'he that believeth shall be saved.' I got my Concordance, but could not find it. I asked several persons I

met to point out the passage, but none of them could do it. I at last determined to search the Scriptures, and see if the things that had been told me were so. I also availed myself of whatever helps I could command. I read commentaries and special books on the subject of baptism. I asked a friend who was well versed in the Scriptures to go through the whole Bible with me, and examine every passage that could throw any light upon the subject. At the same time, I corresponded with Mr. Haigh for some months. At last I was recommended by a Wesleyan friend to read 'Daniel Isaacs on Baptism,' as it was the best book that had been written against the Baptists. I soon found that he knew more about the *design* of baptism than the Baptists did, but his weak defence of infant sprinkling did much to convince me that the Baptists were right as regards the subject and action of baptism. After carefully reading the book through, and examining all the points with a very eager interest, I at last came to the conclusion that the Baptists were right on the subject and action of baptism, while the Wesleyans were right on the design of baptism; for the book evidently convicts the Baptists of holding to a mere form, while practically ignoring the significance of the ordinance."

While Mr. Coop was now convinced that immersion was the scriptural baptism, and that only believers were proper subjects of that baptism, he did not take the step for himself immediately. But during a correspondence with his friend Mr. Haigh, he learned that he (Mr. Haigh) was about to visit Bolton, and was announced to preach there, in the Temperance Hall, three discourses, on Lord's Day, July 4th. The following letter, written by Mr. Haigh to Mr. Coop, refers to this contemplated meeting, and shows something of the nature of the correspondence which was

going on between them. The letter is interesting also as a reminiscence of the past, and we copy it entire, because of its identification of the time of Mr. Coop's baptism :—

“ SOUTH STREET, HUDDERSFIELD,

“ *June 25th, 1841.*

“ RESPECTED FRIEND,—I received a letter from you on the 10th June, inquiring if I intended to answer your former letter. As I had posted my answer to your first letter the day before I did not think it necessary to write to you again, being aware you would receive my communication on the day I received yours. There are, however, two or three points in your letter which I think it proper I should notice. First, as to your intention of visiting Huddersfield this summer if you can. We shall be very glad to see you at our house at Huddersfield, and shall be happy to make you welcome to the best our house affords. Strong drink I know you will not require, and if you did we could not accommodate you—as brewing-tubs, beer-barrels, wine-decanter, spirit-bottles, etc., etc., are articles with which my house is not furnished, neither do I intend it to be. Should you come I should like you to spend at least one Lord's Day with us, that you might have an opportunity of witnessing our order and comparing it with *the rule*. My dear brother Jacob Norman had intended to see you at Wigan to-morrow evening, but he intends to come over to Huddersfield along with another young man, who is intending to be buried with Christ in baptism for the remission of sins on Lord's Day morning. Jacob Norman's wife was immersed on Tuesday evening at Bolton. I was at Bolton on Tuesday and Wednesday alone, business being so slack as not to require two of us. I had an opportunity of spending a few hours in profitable conversation with a number of friends who are inquiring after the truth. They pressed me to attend a

meeting at Bolton, to give an address on primitive Christianity. As I shall be at Blackburn, if the Lord will, next week, I purpose spending the following Lord's Day, July 4th, in Bolton, if the friends can arrange for some meetings at that time. I shall have their decision on Wednesday (all well), and will inform you of it, as I shall be glad to see you there. The Temperance Hall may be easily obtained, and if the friends decide for me to be there, I purpose, if the Lord will, to have three meetings. Subject for the morning: The Ancient Gospel as taught by Jesus and His Apostles. Afternoon: The Constitution and Practices of Primitive Churches. Evening, the same subject continued. Questions may be asked at the close of each meeting. You say you should like to know how the Church is getting on at Huddersfield. We are progressing in knowledge, in numbers, and in usefulness. Last Lord's Day week there were two males and two females immersed and added to the Church. One female was an old woman from Halifax, who has been a Methodist for many years, but on examining the Word she found that she had no warrant to conclude that she was in the kingdom of Jesus, or amongst the saved, until she was immersed for the remission of sins. As she was getting feeble, she determined not to delay her obedience to Jesus in baptism. The other female was her daughter. A son and daughter had been immersed before. The father and another relation intend to be immersed ere long, and then a household will have been baptized, and not an *infant* in it. The two men came over from Delph-in-Saddleworth, where we have had a few meetings for proclaiming the Gospel. We expect five or six next Lord's Day to follow their example, after which a church will be formed, and they will meet on the first day of the week to attend to the Apostle's teaching and fellowship (contribution for the saints is the meaning, 1 Cor. xvi. 1), breaking of bread (Acts xx. 7), and for prayers (Acts ii. 42). My prayer is that God may send forth more labourers, as the fields are white

unto the harvest and the labourers are few. May the Lord add the saved *daily* to the Church. There is no warrant for delay in the Word. I shall be glad to hear from you at your convenience, but still more glad to see you,

“From your affectionate friend,

“WILLIAM HAIGH.”

Mr. Coop attended these meetings, stopping at the house of his master, Mr. John Ackroyd, and was an anxious listener throughout the day. During the evening discourse Mr. Haigh told the people *how* they were to be saved. He showed first that men were sinners, second that Jesus was the Saviour of sinners, and in the third place *how* the Saviour saved these sinners. It was the last point that Mr. Coop was specially interested in. He had already realised that he was a sinner and that Jesus was his Saviour, but he had failed to understand *how the Saviour would save him* until he had first met Mr. Haigh, and even then he was not thoroughly convinced. But now all his doubts left him. He saw clearly, as he had never seen before, what was the plain duty of a believer. It is better to let him tell his own story of what followed. Says he :—

“At the close of the service several people got round the speaker to talk with him, and I also wanted a word with him. I came to the point at once, and said, ‘I believe in Jesus Christ, and what shall I do?’ His answer was, ‘If you believe you ought to be baptized, for the Scriptures say, “He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.” Now if you believe with all your heart in Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, then you should not delay

to obey Him in the ordinance of baptism.' 'Well, I do believe,' said I, 'and what is there to hinder me to be baptized?' He said, 'Nothing, if there is water. But,' continued he, 'I am a stranger here, and do not know where there is any water.' There were a number of persons standing round at the time, and one of these said, 'I know where there is water. I know where the Baptists dip their converts. It is about a mile and a half from here.' This was the canal. I said, 'I am ready to obey the Saviour now.' Mr. Haigh answered, 'I know nothing of the place, but I cannot refuse if you want to obey now. We will go and look at the place.' So we started off, and when we got to the place it was getting dark. The guide said, 'This is the place.' I said to Mr. Haigh, 'Can you swim?' He answered, 'Yes.' Then I said, 'I will be baptized at once.' Most of the company who came to the place with us had gone away, though there were six or eight men who remained. We at once began to undress. Mr. Haigh went into the water first to try the depth, and then I followed, and was buried with my Lord in baptism without any further delay. The act was to me one of the most solemn and significant of my entire life. I came out of the water praising God, and from that time to this day (1886) I have never doubted my Saviour's words when He said, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' Ever since my baptism I have been able to point, not simply to my feelings or emotions, or some strange impressions, as evidence of my pardon, but I have been able to point to the clear statement of the Holy Spirit. When I once came to see the whole subject in the light of the Scriptures, I found a peace which indeed passed all understanding."

What Mr. Coop here refers to became a cardinal principle in all of his subsequent teaching. He held strongly to the notion that the religion of Christ was

a religion of *faith*, and that its assurances, therefore, were the assurances of faith and not of sense. He did not deny the importance of proper religious feeling, for no one had a stronger emotional nature than he, and no one deprecated a cold formal religious life more than he did. What he claimed was that remission of sins was a sovereign act of God, and that this sovereign act of forgiveness was exercised according to a promise, but that this promise was *conditional* upon repentance towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And consequently, when a person was conscious that he did believe with all his heart that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the Living God, and did turn away from his sins with full purpose of heart to serve God, then the next step to be taken was to be baptized, and thus put on Christ or assume the obligations of Christ's government, and that this last act was the overt act of the penitent believer, by which he made a complete surrender to the Divine will, and, consequently, at this point he met the promise which God had made as regards forgiveness of past sins.

At the time of his baptism Mr. Coop did not fully understand the whole meaning of the step he had taken. He realised very clearly that when the Lord told him to do a thing, and he did it, he could then claim the promise which the Lord had attached to the command. Hence he felt perfectly sure, when he had believed the

gospel and had obeyed it, that the promise attached to such belief and obedience was certainly his. But further than this he did not understand the question at that time, though he soon saw that he had got hold of the key which helped him to unlock very many mysteries in the Bible which had before been sealed to him. No wonder he rejoiced ; no wonder he wanted to tell everyone whom he met what had happened ! But he little thought of the trials which awaited him. Like his Divine Master, as soon as he was baptized he began to be tried.

His first trial was with his old master. There was no one then living whom he loved more. He had served an apprenticeship of seven years under him, and had been for some time managing his business at Wigan, while his master remained at Bolton, ten miles distant. During the whole of this time there had never been a cross word between them, and they loved each other, not only because of mutual respect, but because of their respective relations to Christ. They had regarded each other as brethren in Christ, and had often taken sweet counsel together in regard to matters connected with the Wesleyan Church. It was late after the baptism when Mr. Coop reached the house of his master, where he was to stop for the night. "The old gentleman was sitting up," says Mr. Coop, "waiting for me. When I took off my hat he saw that my hair was wet, and he at once asked, 'What is the matter with your hair? How does it come to be so



wet?' I replied, 'I have been baptized.' 'You have been WHAT?' he said. I answered, 'I have been baptized.' 'Who baptized you?' 'Mr. Haigh.' He said, 'I could shoot him this minute.' The old gentleman then got into such a passion as I never saw him in before in my life. I made no reply except to say, 'I have been doing what Jesus commanded, and I believe I have done right. I will not discuss the question now, but will, by your permission, go to bed at once.'"

At this point the conversation closed. Mr. Coop retired to bed with feelings which can only be imagined by those who have passed through something like a similar experience. He had practically, from a religious point of view, turned his back upon all his old friends, and he knew full well that his conduct would be severely criticised by them. But he knew also that his own conscience approved of the step he had taken, and he felt perfectly sure that he had the approbation of his Divine Master. Consequently, while the thought of wounding his old master and his relatives and friends gave him considerable pain, he was more than consoled by the reflection that, in taking the step he had, he was following implicitly the will of his Sovereign Lord. Hence, his bedroom that night became a sacred spot; and when he went upon his knees before his Heavenly Father, it was with a firm resolution to sacrifice, if necessary, all of his friends and friendships, if such a cross had to be laid upon him, in order to follow in the foot-

steps of his great Leader. He was not at all sure about how he would be received by his Wesleyan friends at Wigan, but he was quite sure that they would not be pleased with his conduct. Indeed, after what his old master had said to him, he was impressed with the notion that in all probability he would lose his situation, and would have to begin anew his business career. However, having committed the whole case to Him Whom he now trusted more than ever before, he retired for the night, "believing that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

## CHAPTER VI.

### TRIALS AND PERSECUTIONS.

THE next day after his baptism Mr. Coop returned to Wigan, and entered upon his work as if nothing unusual had happened. However, a great change had come over his own feelings. Up to this period he had never had a clear and satisfactory assurance of pardon. He had been, at times at least, a very devoted Wesleyan, and had been actively engaged in nearly every department of work connected with the Society with which he was identified. Still, at times he was troubled with doubts and fears, and could never quiet these by putting his finger upon some passage of God's Word, where an unmistakable statement of assurance was given to one who occupied his position. He had never regarded baptism as of any special value in the plan of salvation. Whatever there was in it he supposed had been secured to him in his christening when he was a child. But his recent investigations had led him to see that scriptural baptism and christening are two very different things. He had been helped most by coming into clearer views of the *design* of baptism.

During the time he regarded baptism as of no particular consequence, as practically meaning nothing, and therefore standing for nothing in the gospel plan, he did not trouble himself much about it. But when he came to see that it was part of the very commission itself under which the Apostles of Jesus went forth to convert the world, and that it was one of the things which Peter told the Pentecostians to do in order to the remission of sins, he at once saw the importance, not only of obeying the command to be baptized, but also the importance of the proper *subject* and *action* of baptism. It was his clearer understanding of the ordinance that led him to accept believers' immersion as the proper scriptural baptism. This is why his reading of "Isaacs on Baptism" was so helpful to him. He regarded the arguments in favour of infant baptism and sprinkling for baptism as not at all satisfactory; but he felt sure that the doctrine of the design of baptism, as set forth in the book, was much more conclusive than the views of the Baptists as he understood them. And just as soon as he got something like a clear apprehension of the scriptural design, he saw also the importance of its administration according to the scriptural teaching. So that it may be regarded as a settled fact that the turning-point in his mind upon this whole question was effected by his understanding the design of baptism, rather than by an understanding of the proper subject and action. He felt that if baptism was really important, had some connection with salvation or remission of sins, was indeed

a part of the conditions prescribed in the commission, then the proper antecedents and action were also important; but on the other hand, if baptism amounted to nothing, really occupied no important place in the plan of salvation, then it was of little consequence whether one was sprinkled, poured, or immersed, or whether this was done in infancy or upon a profession of faith.

With these new views well grounded, though not very thoroughly systematised, he met his old friends. Nor was he mistaken in his notions as to how they would receive him. As already intimated, he had expected they would disapprove of his course, and this was soon made apparent. After the fact of his baptism became known in the community, the first to call upon him was his class-leader, to know what course he (Mr. Coop) was going to take. So far, he had thought little about his future church associations. He had been so absorbed with the single question of loyalty to his Master, that he had almost practically lost sight of the question of church membership or fellowship; but when he had his attention directed to the question of his future work, he at once decided not to leave his class, nor disassociate himself in any way from the Wesleyan body. However, it soon became evident that a great change had come over the feeling of the members of the chapel. The preachers and leading members warned the rest against him, and it was not long until he had little or no sympathy from any of his former associates. They expressed great sorrow and

regret at his course, for they had been very devotedly attached to him. But now he had taken a step which they could not forgive.

Their conduct at once forced him into defending himself, and this brought on heated controversies between himself and some of the members. He was not anxious for disputation, but he felt that he must "give a reason of the hope that was in him," even though he did not always do it "with meekness and fear." Indeed, he himself says of these disputes, "Had I disputed less and prayed more with them, more real good might have been accomplished." At any rate, he was looked upon as a dangerous character ; as one who had gone out of the way, though he was not regarded as a backslider. No one could say anything against his Christian character. In all that related to moral excellence he was the peer of any one in the town ; and as a benevolent, whole-hearted helper in every good word and work, he was the superior of most of those who found fault with him for what they regarded as a foolish step. Even the preachers became excited about the matter, and in their sermons frequent references were made to Mr. Coop's defection. Some of his dearest friends, the very persons who, he expected, would be glad to listen to him, turned out to be the most bitter against him. However, none of these things moved him. On the other hand, the bitter opposition which he experienced tended rather to establish him in his faith. He

examined himself carefully, and was sure that he felt no resentment in his own heart against any of those who were persecuting him ; and, consequently, he could not help feeling that their conduct did not increase his respect for the high professions which they made. He thought if their position was scriptural, and therefore right, while his was unscriptural and wrong, then their spirit and conduct ought to correspond, somewhat at least, to their superior religious standpoint.

The opposition went so far that even his employer told a friend that he thought seriously of dismissing Mr. Coop from the business, and also taking his name out of his will, where he had left him a bequest of £100. But this friend said, "You had better not do that, for if this work be of man it will come to nought, but if it be of God you should be careful lest you be found fighting against God." The consequence was that the decisive step of dismissal was not taken, though undoubtedly it was seriously contemplated.

But Mr. Ackroyd did not give the matter up. The next time Mr. Coop went to Bolton, Mr. Ackroyd sent for the Rev. Nehemiah Curnock to come and talk the whole matter over with Mr. Coop. These two had a long conference together, at the conclusion of which the reverend gentleman told Mr. Ackroyd that, after all, it was his decided opinion that Mr. Coop was not very far wrong, and that if he (Mr. Curnock) could have choice of sides on the baptismal question, he would prefer to take the

Baptist side rather than the side of the Wesleyans. From that time Mr. Ackroyd said nothing further about the matter, and he and Mr. Coop again became warm and steadfast friends, and Mr. Ackroyd's will was not changed.

But the question of Mr. Coop's position was not allowed to rest. The matter was talked of all over the district, and very considerable interest was manifested among the Wesleyans as to what ought to be done with Mr. Coop. At last two of his most intimate friends among the Wesleyans came to see him, with a view to reaching some definite conclusion. These two friends were amongst the most liberal of the Wesleyan body, and consequently Mr. Coop received them very cordially. As this conversation is very important, it is deemed best to give it in Mr. Coop's own language. He tells the story as follows :—

“After considerable conversation, I found that my good friends had come as a deputation to counsel with me, and they at last put this question, ‘What are you going to do?’ The question rather staggered me. I said, ‘I do not know what you mean.’ They then said, ‘Are you going to leave the school or Society?’ I told them that I had no idea of leaving either. They said, ‘Then what are you going to teach!’ I answered, ‘I will teach any class you wish.’ But they said, ‘That is not what we mean: will you teach baptism?’ I answered, ‘Not unless it comes in my way, and then, if it does, I shall not shrink from teaching what I believe to be true. You must not think of putting a padlock upon my mouth.’ They then asked, ‘Will you promise not to teach baptism?’ I answered, ‘No, I cannot



make any such promise. I cannot refuse to teach anything in the Word of God, and at the proper time and place. I would not wish to obtrude baptism in an unseemly way, but surely, if I felt there was occasion for my teaching what the Scriptures say about it, I would not hesitate to do so, for I could not be true to my conscience by taking any other course.' This seemed to destroy all hope on their part that I would acquiesce in their wishes; so they said they thought I had better leave both the Sunday-school and the Society. But said I, 'Will I be allowed to go to the chapel, and pay for my pew?' They answered, 'Oh yes! we shall not hinder you from doing that.' 'Will you also allow me to go round with my tracts as usual?' 'Oh yes!' they answered; 'you can do that also.'

"At this point the conversation ended. I was not charged with doing, or saying, anything wrong; I was never exhorted or reproved; the travelling preacher never came to see me; nor was there the slightest reflection upon my conduct with any proof furnished from the Word of God that my conduct was wrong. I continued to pay my pew-rent for several years after this, and found that this was not objected to by anyone. I dropped off going to class, but continued occasionally to go to chapel. I took my tracts round as usual, and kept up active religious work as best I could, though I had little sympathy from anyone in the town with whom I had formerly been religiously associated."

While it was no part of Mr. Coop's original plan to leave the Wesleyan body, he now felt that he had been shut out from their fellowship. It is true that he had not been formally excluded, nor had he been absolutely refused a place in his class. Nevertheless, the strong intimations which he had received made him feel that he was not

especially wanted where he had formerly been so active and prominent. Of course he began to seek other channels through which he could be useful. One of these channels he found in his tract distribution. While going his rounds, he often came in contact with persons who were willing to talk on religious matters. With these he had earnest conversations, and in some cases these conversations resulted in conversions. On one of his rounds he met an old Wesleyan backslider, who had formerly been a member at the Wesleyan Chapel, but had not been in attendance for some time. This man had become a total abstainer, and was a strong advocate of the Temperance movement. Mr. Coop talked with him about his state of mind concerning religious matters, and asked him to come to his house on Sunday afternoon, where they would read the Word of God together. This was agreed to, and during the week Mr. Coop invited a few others to come at the same time. The result was that on Sunday afternoon some four or five men came into the cellar-kitchen under his shop, where a Bible-class was held for about an hour. This was closed by an earnest prayer for the Divine blessing, when an invitation was given to all present to assemble again on the following Lord's Day.

At the next meeting two more were added to their number, and at the close of the meeting the backslider said he wished to ask a question. He said, "I want to be baptized and obey the Saviour—what hinders me?" As regards this case Mr. Coop says:—

"That was rather startling to me, for we had\* no person amongst us who had ever baptized anyone, and I knew nothing about the Baptists, and did not know whether it was possible to get one of their number to baptize or not. But the man said, 'You have convinced me of my duty, and I want *you* to baptize me.' This placed me in a very awkward position. First of all, I had never baptized anyone in my life; indeed, I had never seen anybody baptized till I was baptized myself, and was not, therefore, quite sure about my ability to administer the ordinance as it should be done; but, in the second place, I was not sure about whether I could scripturally administer the ordinance, as I was not an ordained preacher.

"This brought the whole question up as to who had a right to baptize, and before we proceeded any further we decided to examine carefully what the Word of God said upon the subject. We had already learned that we had been mistaken in some other things, and consequently we had ceased to rely implicitly upon any preconceived impressions before a careful examination of the Scriptures. In our Bible-class we had agreed to accept of nothing as finally settled for which we could not find either precept or example in the New Testament.

"Consequently, this question of the right to baptize sent us to the Scriptures. During this examination of the Divine Word we learned:—

"1. That the commission to baptize was first given by God to John the Baptist.

"2. The disciples of Jesus baptized in the presence of Jesus, though Jesus Himself did not baptize.

"3. After the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and just before His ascension, He gave the great commission to His Apostles to preach and baptize, and that it is under this commission that all who preach and baptize now are acting.

"4. We learned still further that at the first persecution, when

Stephen was stoned, all the disciples were scattered abroad except the Apostles, and that these disciples went everywhere preaching the Word.

“5. We learned that Philip, who was not an Apostle, but simply an evangelist, went down to Samaria and preached Christ to the people, and when they believed his ‘preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.’

“6. We learned also that this same Philip baptized the eunuch, after the eunuch confessed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

“After a careful induction of many Scriptures, it was found that the command to baptize was given specifically, but there were no special qualifications required of the person who did the baptizing. Hence, we concluded that the validity of the ordinance did not depend upon the person who administered it, but rather upon the faith and fitness of the person receiving it. We concluded that while good order might suggest the propriety of a regularly ordained preacher administering baptism, this, however, must not be regarded as an essential condition to its validity. It was held that when an exigency arose demanding it, any Christian could rightfully administer the ordinance, without any respect whatever to what is called ordination. So we reached the conclusion that I could baptize as well as anyone else, and from this time forward I never hesitated to do so whenever I was called upon for that purpose.”

The case which had brought up all this discussion was accordingly attended to by Mr. Coop, without any hesitation, as soon as he had convinced himself that he had the right to baptize. The man wished to be baptized in the river Douglas, and preferred that it should be done privately and at night. But notwithstanding this

precaution, the matter soon got noised abroad,\* and when all the facts were known there was considerable commotion among the religious bodies, and a number of preachers began to warn their flocks against what they considered rank heresy. This opposition, however, only stimulated Mr. Coop to more active propagation of his views. He had now fairly burned all the bridges behind him, and as he had already baptized one person he no longer felt any hesitancy in carrying out the whole gospel as he now understood it. Accordingly, he began at once to earnestly disseminate his views upon all the questions involved in his differences with the various religious denominations. At the beginning he found himself practically alone, but in a short time he gained a few sympathisers ; and now, in the autumn of 1841, only a few months after his baptism, we find him energetically preaching the gospel wherever he could get a hearing, and baptizing the people whenever they wished it.

It appears that the people generally were greatly interested in the baptisms, and usually large crowds gathered to witness these. Mr. Coop says :—

“On one occasion it got noised abroad that we were going to baptize on the Sunday afternoon, and, as a consequence, a large crowd gathered together to witness the baptism. It was a place where we had never been before, and I was not sure about its fitness for the purpose ; and as I did not wish to make any mistake, I paid a man to walk into the river on the previous Saturday so that he could let me know the exact depth. He

found out that the deepest place would take me up to my armpits. There were two persons to be baptized, one an old woman and the other a young man. I asked the young man if he could swim. He answered 'Yes.' I told him to go into the water; at the same time I took the woman in. While I was arranging the old woman I dropped into a hole, and went up to my chin in water. It was with the greatest difficulty that I recovered myself. However, I finally got out of the hole, and re-adjusting myself went on with my work. After the baptism I noticed that the people were a little excited, consequently, as soon as I got out of the water, I mounted a gatepost five or six feet high, with the water dripping from my clothes. I preached to a very large crowd of people. Thus, by taking advantage of what at first seemed likely to turn out a hindrance to the truth, I was enabled to get before a large audience the great fundamental principles of the gospel.

"At another time I was at the Weir Bridges, returning from business, and was met by a woman who wished to be baptized; and without going to change my clothes I went into the water and baptized her. On coming out, I found I had also baptized my gold watch, which cost me over £1 to get right again. I often told the woman she ought to be a very good Christian, for her baptism cost me more than that of any other person.

"There was a very stout lady who made the confession and wished to obey her Saviour, but she feared going into the river Douglas. I sympathised with her in her fear, and consequently decided to ask the Baptists in Lord Street if they would allow us to use their baptistery. I told the peculiar circumstances of the case to the person through whom I made application. I was asked a great many questions, and then was told that the matter would be placed before the church. A church-meeting was called, and the question was fully discussed, some of the members

showing decided opposition to my application. There was one member, however—Mrs. Crook, the widow of the late pastor of the church—who was decidedly in favour of our having the use of the baptistery. The pastor who was then in charge had gathered from my conversation that I was not thoroughly orthodox from his point of view. The consequence was he opposed the application. The resolution, however, was finally put to the meeting, and the vote was a tie, the same number voting on each side. The pastor gave the casting vote against our having the baptistery, and, of course, we were shut out. As a result, the lady who should have been baptized left the town, and finally united with the Latter Day Saints, and died a Mormon. This Baptist pastor and myself afterwards became warm friends, and one day, at least thirty years after the above incident, in conversation with him, he alluded to the fact of his opposition to my having the baptistery; and expressed his regret at having taken the course he did. I told him I would forgive him if he would come and preach for us; but he told me he was too old then, and was not able to preach. I told him that I had already forgiven him, as I was satisfied he knew not what he did."

In August 1841 the first meeting was held to break bread. This meeting was held in Mr. Coop's cellar-kitchen, under the shop in the market-place, and the number present consisted of four persons, viz., T. Coop, Jacob Norman, Samuel Lucas, and George Sinclair. This was the small beginning of a church which afterwards became large and influential.

The question of breaking bread the first day of every week soon came up for consideration, after a few persons had been baptized. Mr. Coop kept in correspondence

with his friend Mr. Haigh, the person who had baptized him, and this gentleman did not fail to instruct his earnest and active young convert in all matters pertaining to what they called New Testament Christianity. In a letter written by Mr. Haigh about this time to Mr. Coop the question of attending to the Lord's Supper is urged as an important matter. The ground of this urgency is found in several passages of Scripture, as well as what is declared to have been the practice of the Apostolic churches.

Mr. Coop himself soon came to regard the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as of very great importance. He saw that it was the specific ordinance for the baptized believer, as baptism was for the penitent believer. In other words, baptism was not an ordinance of the church at all, but an ordinance which belonged to the gospel; while the Lord's Supper was specially intended for those who had believed in Christ and had put Him on in baptism.

The logic of this generalising soon carried Mr. Coop and his friends much farther than they at first expected. It was assumed that only those who believed the gospel, repented of their sins, and were baptized could be regarded as Christians, and, therefore, in the Church of God; and it was consequently contended that as baptism was the last act of the penitent believer in his return to God, and by which act he was translated from the world into Christ, and into His kingdom, so the Lord's Supper, being ordained by Christ for His disciples, belonged exclusively to them. In other words, an unbaptized penitent believer



was not constitutionally in the Church ; and as the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was in the Church and not out of it, an unbaptized believer could not rightfully partake of it.

This view of the matter did not occur to Mr. Coop when he was himself baptized ; but as soon as he began to meet with others for the purpose of breaking bread, the question as to who had a right to break bread was at once forced upon his attention. It is only just to him to say that he did not at first fully sympathise with the views held by some with whom he had conference. But gradually he gave way to what seemed conclusive reasoning, until he practically accepted what has been called close or restricted communion.

However, at the time under consideration, this view of the matter did not occupy a prominent place, if indeed it was regarded seriously at all. The main question about which the little company were concerned was the importance of attending to the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week. Mr. Coop himself was specially interested in weekly communion. He felt that this ordinance had been neglected almost as much as the ordinance of baptism. We have already seen that he was converted to believers' immersion through coming to understand what he regarded as the scriptural design of the ordinance ; and it may be said that what he considered to be the proper design of the Lord's Supper largely influenced him in seeking to attend to it on the first day of every week. He

found that when the disciples of the primitive churches came together on the first day of the week it was mainly for the purpose of breaking bread ; that this was, in fact, the controlling reason for their coming together at all, and that, consequently, the Lord's Supper was made the chief attraction in the Lord's Day services. This prominence, however, which the Lord's Supper received in the primitive churches was no longer given in the modern churches ; hence Mr. Coop was deeply impressed with the fact that a reformation at this point was greatly needed. He saw plainly that he must not only contend for the proper place of baptism, but he must also contend for the proper place of the Lord's Supper. And it was around these two ordinances, as pivotal points, that he rallied his little band for the conflicts which followed.

And as we have now reached the time when we find him fully committed to a religious movement in which he had practically nearly all the churches in the country against him, as well as all the influences of evil, it is worth while to remark upon his comparative youth. When we remember that he was just in the twenty-fifth year of his age, with only a limited education, and with heavy business obligations pressing upon him, we can form some idea of the courage which was necessary to take the steps he did, as well as the inherent power of the plea which he made, in order to achieve any success. A less determined man would never have tried to contend against such odds, and a less powerful plea would have utterly failed in such a contest.

## CHAPTER ·VII.

### CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH.

THE little church, which was now fairly started, soon made itself felt in the community. It had some definite principles. The gospel which it preached could be understood by the people. The mysticism of many of the Protestant churches, as well as the ritualism of others, was discarded, and a plain, simple gospel of facts, commands, promises, threatenings, etc., was everywhere proclaimed. The *facts* were declared to be: the death of Christ for our sins, according to the Scriptures, His burial and resurrection, the third day, according to the Scriptures; the *commands* were declared to be: repentance towards God, confession of faith in Christ, and baptism, in the name of Jesus Christ, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the *promises* were declared to be: remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the hope of eternal life; while the *threatenings* were such as are found everywhere in the Word of God against the unbeliever.

With these definite, clearly defined, and impressive things the little band of believers went before the people.

Most of the members had come from other religious bodies, or else had been sorely perplexed as regards the teaching on religious matters which they had been accustomed to hear. The principles of the little church came as a revelation to them, and, embracing these principles joyfully, it is not strange that every member became an enthusiastic advocate of what he called "the simplicity of the gospel." They had no special preacher among them. In fact, no preaching, according to the usual understanding, was even attempted. Certainly there was no sermonising in the house where the believers gathered. But there was activity manifested, both indoors and out. There was plenty of *teaching* in the house, as well as exhortation to duty; and out of the house, wherever a hearing could be secured, there the gospel was proclaimed, and when the people cried out, asking, "What must we do?" the answer was given according to the Apostolic pattern, and many were baptized the same day and the same hour of the night.

About this time Mr. John Ackroyd died, leaving in his will £100 to his manager. Meantime, all the property came into the hands of Mr. William Ackroyd, the brother of John. Mr. William Ackroyd at once took young Coop into partnership in the Wigan business. But as Mr. Ackroyd went to live in London, Mr. Coop continued to have the sole management of the business. The firm continued in the shop which they had leased from the old publican until the end of the lease, when the publican

gave them notice that he would raise the rent £20 a year on a lease for seven years. This was regarded by Mr. Coop as entirely too much, but rather than move, or have any trouble, he finally consented. But he never ceased to have difficulty with the old publican until he left him.

Meantime, Mr. Coop's new position as partner gave him considerable influence in the community where he lived, and at the same time increased his own sense of responsibility as a man and a Christian. He had now practically the entire control of an already prosperous and growing business. He had begun to realise his ideal. By honest dealing he gained the respect and confidence of all his customers, and by earnest industry he kept himself in touch with all the departments of his business. He was really ubiquitous. He went everywhere. He knew precisely what was being done, even down to the smallest detail. And this personal attention not only inspired industry in those under his management with the spirit of their master, but was a great advantage to Mr. Coop himself, as it enabled him to understand the needs of the business and to provide for them.

Ever since the formation of the little church, with which Mr. Coop was connected, he had been its chief supporter, and in some respects its most active member. All the time he could spare from business was freely given to Christian work. Out of business hours he was constantly working. Everywhere he could secure the attention of either individuals or a gathering of people, he was found

ready and eager to tell out the old, old story as he understood it. As a speaker he had remarkable power, considering the character of his education. But even his limited education was of no special disadvantage to him in dealing with the people with whom he came in contact. He understood the needs of the working-classes; he knew also the struggles and trials of the people generally, as regarded their religious experience, and he was able, therefore, to speak to them in a language which they could understand. Besides all this, he had a great deal of what has been called *heart power*. His sympathies were easily excited, and he had the ability as a preacher to speak directly to the heart. Before an audience, made up of the class most familiar to him, his appeals were well-nigh irresistible. The consequence was that he was a much more effective preacher than many educated men who filled the various denominational pulpits of the town.

Nor was he alone in this power of persuasion. He soon gathered about him a number of others, who, if not so strongly emotional as he was, were nevertheless effective speakers; and as logicians some of them excelled as much as he did in hortatory powers. When we take into consideration the religious state of things at that time, and the simple presentation made by this band of believers, set on fire as they were by an earnest zeal, and pleading as they did with those whose condition was thoroughly familiar to them, it is not surprising that the

success which attended their labours at once began to attract the attention of the town and neighbourhood.

However, the peculiar labours of Mr. Coop caused him to realise the necessity of making an important change in his domestic affairs. He did a great deal of visiting from house to house, and was, consequently, thrown into intimate relations with a great many of all classes of people. This fact made him realise the great need of a helpmeet in so important a work. After thinking the matter over, he made up his mind that the next step for him to take was to get married. The matter is stated in this way, simply because this is precisely the way he looked at it; and this fact serves to illustrate the eminently practical character of his mind. He never did anything in a sentimental sort of way. He had a deeply earnest emotional nature. Indeed, he was as high strung, in many respects as a woman, and was capable of as fine feeling as any person in the whole circle in which he moved. But, notwithstanding all this, he was eminently practical. He had no abiding interest in anything that did not promise useful results. As a consequence, when he came to look at the question of marriage, he looked at it mainly from the practical point of view.

As regards this matter, we prefer to quote his own rather laconic and somewhat amusing style. He says:—

“The church being composed of an uneducated people, many of whom were of the lowest class of society, I began to look about for a helpmeet. I spent very little time in courting, but having

made up my mind that a most estimable young woman by the name of Ruth Walsh was the proper person, I lost no time, but 'popped' the question at once. The whole matter was soon settled so far as the preliminaries were concerned. I asked her if we should get married on a certain date. She consented, and we were accordingly married at that time."

This marriage took place in February 1842, and he soon found in his wife a brave and earnest helper in all that related to his work. About two years after the marriage they had a daughter born unto them ; and this child proved to be a great joy to both father and mother. The father speaks of her in the following manner :—

"The child was rather delicate when a baby, and my time was much occupied in nursing her. One day, after she could talk a little, while walking about the room with her in my arms, I was singing the familiar chorus 'I love Jesus—Yes, I do,' when to my great surprise and delight she joined in the chorus, 'Yes, I do,' and in the right tune also. I cannot tell how deeply affected I was. Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than to know that my dear child had some tune in her soul ; and this encouraged me to cultivate it. From that time I was solicitous that she should be a singer and player ; and at the age of three and a half years she could play simple pieces on the piano. As she was my constant companion for many years afterwards, her musical gifts were a great comfort to me."

About this time, and for the next few years, we find Mr. Coop actively engaged both in business and in preaching the gospel. He had all the care of the firm, and felt bound to give all his business hours to the work for



which he was specially responsible. But he had leisure in the evenings, and these were generally devoted to religious work. He did much in private. He made special appointments with persons for conference, and as he relied exclusively upon his Bible for help in all these conferences, he scarcely ever failed to carry conviction to those who were deeply in earnest. Indeed, he accomplished more in this way than he did in the public meetings, though his speaking was most effective. In his presentation of the gospel, he confined himself to a few simple facts and principles. But his power to move the people was very great, and his industry was such that this power was brought to bear at some place almost every Lord's Day, as well as at frequent evening meetings. He preached much of the time in the street, and had a special lamp-post at the market, under which he frequently stood and proclaimed the gospel to the people. During this time there was considerable talk about the Latter Day Saints and Owenites, but these did not make much headway. The Catholics were the worst enemies Mr. Coop and his friends had. They exercised considerable influence on the Town Council, and they used this for the purpose of trying to stop Mr. Coop and his friends from preaching in the market-place. Finally the matter reached a crisis, and Mr. Coop tells us the story as follows :—

“ The chief constable came to see me. I told him that he had no right to interfere so long as we did not block the road. He

threatened to stop us, and gave me notice that if I preached again he would take further steps against me. I told him that if the Lord spared my health I should preach the following Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. He sent a policeman to watch the proceedings. Punctually at three I gave out a hymn before a large congregation which had gathered. While singing the third verse the policeman came and pulled my coat tails. At first I took no notice of him, and consequently he gave another pull, this time much stronger than the first. I now said, 'What do you want?' He replied that he had orders to stop me. 'Do your duty,' I said, 'I am trying to do mine. I have a commission from very high Authority to speak to these people, and it is your duty to protect me, and see that we have an orderly meeting, and I hope you will do so.' So I invited him to remain amongst us and see that everything was done decently and in order. I then said to the people, 'We will now sing the fourth verse.' The policeman remained to the close, but did not interfere any further. The meeting was very orderly, and after that day no one attempted to stop us. I frequently spoke there subsequently, and it is still used as a point from which to preach the gospel. The Roman Catholics were determined to stop it, but the Protestants, though they did not like our preaching, did not care to have the open air services stopped. So in the contest we practically had the Protestant population on our side."

While there was considerable opposition to the principles advocated by Mr. Coop and his friends, it was impossible not to accord to them the sincerest motives. They were practically isolated from all the Protestant churches around them, but all these churches were compelled to acknowledge that the new movement was reaching a class of people which had not been touched

by them. Some of the very lowest and most abandoned people were reclaimed from lives of shame, drunkenness, and general worthlessness. A good work was specially done among the colliers. A number of these came forward, confessing their sins, were baptized, and added to the church.

Mr. Coop tells of one man whose case is specially interesting. He speaks of him as follows :—

“One very remarkable man, a teacher in a day-school, who had been a Methodist for nearly fifty years, invited us to have a meeting in his house. We accordingly went and held a meeting, and some time after he sent for me to have a conference with him. I was not at home at the time, and, consequently, did not see him. He was unwilling to wait for my return, and so told the friends that he had had a very impressive dream, and this had largely influenced him to decide to be baptized. He had been afflicted with rheumatic gout for over seven years, and had not been twenty yards from his home during that time. He could only walk about two inches at a step, so that he was very lame. He told the church his dream. He said he dreamed that he had died, and appeared at the gate of heaven and knocked for admission. The angels inquired, ‘Who is there?’ and his answer was, ‘Joseph Mercer, Independent Methodist.’ But the reply was that no such persons were known there; that only *Christians* were admitted. He said he was a Christian. But they told him there was one important thing that he had not attended to, and that was baptism. With this a horror seized him, perspiration burst out from every pore, he trembled, and was in the greatest excitement. In the morning he sent for the friends, and wished to be baptized at once. ‘But,’ they said, ‘how can we get you to the water—it is nearly half a mile off?’

His reply was, 'The infirmities of the body man may endure, but a wounded spirit who can bear? I must go.' And they accordingly started off with him, and were nearly two hours getting him to the water. They baptized him in the river Douglas, and, to the amazement of all, he sprang out of the water, got dressed, walked home quickly, and attended the preaching every Sunday as regularly as clockwork for seven years. It had the appearance of a great miracle. The Latter Day Saints had nothing like it. He was a wonder to the whole town, and when the people met him going down to our meetings on Sunday, they were greatly delighted, for he was very highly respected."

About this time Mr. Coop made the acquaintance of a Mr. Caldecott, a retired naval officer of independent means, who was living in Wigan. This gentleman was very learned, but somewhat singular in his religious notions. He brought out a new version of the New Testament, which is somewhat like the Revised Version, many of the same changes being made. However, the term *baptize*, in the commission (Mark xvi. 16), he translated, "He that believeth and is *bathed* shall be saved." In Acts ii. 3-8, he put it, "Be *bathed* every one of you," etc. He spent his whole time in preaching. He was accustomed to walk the streets with a little three-legged stool in his hand, and when he came to a suitable place, he would put his stool down and begin to read. Very soon a few children would gather about him. He would then engage in prayer, and if he could only keep together half-a-dozen people he would preach to them. He was

greatly persecuted at times. On one occasion he was brought before the magistrates for preaching. They reprovèd and fined him, but he came down the steps of the court, and as soon as he got outside the doors began to sing, "Praise God from all blessings flow." He had formerly been a captain in the navy, and was converted while he was on the sea by reading his New Testament. He had no associates, nor did he seem to care for any, as his whole time was taken up in preaching the gospel.

He wore a very long beard, and was an intensely interesting character, though very eccentric. He could always get a crowd of children, as they seemed to follow him out of curiosity. He was evidently a very sincere man, as he gave the whole of his income to the poor. At his death a large number of his new translation, bound in calf, were found in his room. These fell into the hands of his brother, who became heir of his property. This brother being a High Churchman, living in Chester, took the whole of the books which were found and burnt them. Mr. Coop had secured one of these Testaments, and prized it very highly, and it is now among the books which he left.

This book was of considerable value to Mr. Coop in his studies of the New Testament. He found that many of the variations from the Authorised Version were helpful in enabling him to get at the true meaning of the Holy Spirit, and as this was exactly what Mr. Coop most

desired, he read this Testament with a great deal of care. Besides, he often held conversations with Mr. Caldecott, and he (Mr. Caldecott) being a good scholar, was enabled to help Mr. Coop into a better understanding of many difficult passages which had often puzzled him. Up to this time Mr. Caldecott was the only person with whom Mr. Coop had come into contact who claimed any particular scholarship, and it was through this gentleman, in his conversations with Mr. Coop, as well as the New Testament which he had translated, that Mr. Coop became acquainted with the solution of a number of important biblical questions.

By this time the church with which Mr. Coop was now associated had grown into importance. Its numerical strength was quite respectable, though most of the members were very poor. As already intimated, they had little or no sympathy from any of the Dissenting churches of the town, and were bitterly opposed by the Catholics, while they were treated with contempt by Churchmen. However, their power was despised by very few, as it was evident they were making decided headway among a class of people who greatly needed the reforming power of the Gospel. But the enthusiasm of Mr. Coop, at any rate, was not measured by success. He was profoundly conscious that the religious position which he occupied was in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures, and, finding himself quite able to successfully contend with all who disputed his principles, he was the more

emboldened to carry on an aggressive warfare against all opposing influences. The other churches had shown him no quarter, and now, in turn, he was not much disposed to show any quarter to them. Having gained considerable foothold in the town, he was now in a position to meet his assailants in a manner somewhat commensurate with the intensity of their opposition.

But this condition of things carried Mr. Coop's aggressiveness sometimes into extremes. He became fond of discussion, though it can scarcely be charged against him that he was fond of it for the simple pleasure that he had in discussion itself. He was too conscientious to use the Word of God simply for the sake of triumphing over an opponent. He saw that it was easy for him to triumph by using the sword of the Spirit as he did, but he constantly aimed to make this triumph redound to the glory of Him whose cause was, from his point of view, clearly involved in the controversy. Nevertheless, these were days which begat in him a controversial spirit, and this cannot be wondered at, when it is remembered that every inch of ground which Mr. Coop gained for the church which had been established had to be fought for, and then maintained by the most determined resolution. Day by day, and night by night, the contest continued. The clergy and ministers of the Nonconformist churches, for the most part, kept aloof from Mr. Coop and his friends, but frequent references were made to them from various pulpits, the people being generally warned against the

doctrine which was taught, while many of the rank and file of the various Protestant churches attacked Mr. Coop and his friends, only to receive a severe repulse from the well-stored armoury of those who took their stand upon the Word of God.



## CHAPTER · VIII.

### FINDING NEW FRIENDS.

SO far Mr. Coop's religious work has been considered as simply local. We have seen that the small beginning of four persons who were associated at the first Communion Service held in Mr. Coop's cellar-kitchen continued to grow in importance until the year 1845, at which time the church had reached the very considerable position and influence to which reference was made in the last chapter. However, up to that year Mr. Coop knew little or nothing about any other churches of a similar faith and practice. Being closely confined to business, he had little opportunity to visit other places, and consequently his religious work was confined mainly to the town of Wigan where he resided. But about the time mentioned he began to hear of other churches and other workers, who were practically occupying the same religious position which he and the church with which he was locally identified did.

Of course he was delighted at this unexpected good fortune. In the month of May, 1845, he became personally acquainted with Mr. James Wallis of Nottingham,

the editor<sup>a</sup> and publisher of a monthly magazine entitled the *Christian Messenger*, the first volume of which, in its enlarged form, was published in that year. This acquaintance grew into intimacy, and the two became steadfast friends as long as Mr. Wallis lived. Through this brother and the magazine which he published Mr. Coop was led to a more intimate knowledge of the churches scattered throughout the country, which were practically identical with the one he had been instrumental in starting at Wigan.

The religious people thus made known to Mr. Coop had grown out of a movement which had been started in America. And as frequent reference will be made to these American brethren it may be well to give a sketch of their rise and progress.

In the year 1807, Thomas Campbell, a relative and classmate of the Scotch poet of the same name, a distinguished Presbyterian minister of the New Market Presbytery in the north of Ireland, emigrated to the United States, and settled as a minister of the gospel under the direction of the "Presbytery of Chartiers," then attached to the "Associated Synod of North America." Mr. Campbell was educated at the Glasgow University, and was one of the most accurate English and classical scholars of his time.

He had been in America only a little while until he conceived a system of Christian union upon the basis of the Bible, and the Bible alone. His plan was dis-

tasteful to his Presbytery, and consequently the discussion between him and it ended in a separation in 1808. At about the same time some very remarkable papers emanated from his pen, entitled "A DECLARATION AND ADDRESS," and "A PROSPECTUS OF A RELIGIOUS REFORMATION." The burden of these papers was the inefficiency of denominational organisations for the enlightenment and salvation of the world, and, therefore, the necessity of a radical change of base for future operations in attacking the kingdom of darkness.

Nor was he long in putting to a practical test the principles which he enunciated. Discarding all human creeds and confessions of faith, he formed a society, in Washington, Pennsylvania, to give expression and force to his sentiments. This was followed by other societies, until it was evident that he had touched a popular chord, to which the people were quite willing to respond when they became acquainted with the real purpose which he had in view. This purpose was stated to be "the absolute and entire rejection of human authority in matters of religion," and a determination to stand together upon the proposition that "the Holy Scriptures are all-sufficient and alone-sufficient as the subject-matter of faith and rule of conduct, and that, therefore, they would require nothing as matter of faith or rule of conduct for which they could not give a '*thus saith the Lord*,' either in expressed terms or by approved precedent."

It should be stated, however, that while Thomas

Campbell was the author of the movement in its initial form, the chief credit is due to his son, Alexander, in developing the principles laid down by his father, and in enforcing these upon public attention.

Alexander, like his father, was educated at the Glasgow University. He was also a Presbyterian, after the strictest sect of that body. He completed his university education at Glasgow in 1808, and the next year went to the United States, and, landing at New York, he proceeded in October to join his father at Washington, Pennsylvania. While reading the proof-sheets of the addresses to which reference has been made, he was at once struck with their remarkable character, and did not hesitate to predict that the leaven of those papers would work greater change than the author dreamed of, affirming, at the same time, that the statement concerning the Bible alone as a rule of faith and practice would certainly rule out infant baptism. He at once entered very heartily into all the plans of his father, and became practically the leading spirit in inaugurating what has since been called in the United States "the Reformation of the nineteenth century."

He was unceasing in his labours and studies, and became more and more convinced of the want of scriptural authority for infant sprinkling. His habit was to read every day a portion of his Greek New Testament without note or comment, and in this way he formed independent conclusions, and the result of this was that, in 1812, he

declared to the family that he had never been baptized. His great respect for his father's judgment and example could restrain him no longer, and he at length decided to be immersed, whether his father followed him or not. However, the subject was fully discussed in the family circle, and finally seven persons, including his father and most of the Campbell family, were immersed by a Baptist preacher by the name of Matthias Luse, who was a member of the Redstone Baptist Association.

Very soon several others were gathered into the fellowship of this little company, and the weekly communion was established. After this the movement began to spread rapidly, and six churches formed on this basis were admitted in the year 1815 into the Redstone Baptist Association. The next year, Alexander Campbell delivered his famous address before this Association on *THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL*, and was immediately suspected of heresy by some of his Baptist friends. Indeed, there were not a few who were watching him carefully from the time he entered the Association. He was by far the most intellectual and scholarly man connected with the Baptists at that time, and the disparity between him and the Baptists of the Redstone Association was specially noticeable. In fact, it may be said that he was the only scholar in that Association, and the only man of marked ability. His sermon, therefore, on *the LAW AND THE GOSPEL* was far above the reach of most of those who heard it, and as it did not harmonise

with the stereotyped phrases of Baptist theology, as the preachers of that day had learned it, it was at once pronounced to contain dangerous doctrine, though no one could tell exactly wherein the danger consisted, nor could they point out where it differed from the teaching of the New Testament. • The whole pith of the argument of Mr. Campbell's sermon was that we are not under the law but under the gospel, not under Moses but under Christ ; that the new covenant abrogates the old ; and that we are bound only by the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. This was believed by some of his Baptist brethren to strike at the fundamental doctrines of Baptist faith, and so an effort was made to turn him out of the Association. However, this petty bigotry failed, as the opposition could not muster a majority against him. But, finally, a piece of strategy was resorted to : a rule was adopted as to the reception of congregations into the Association, providing that all the congregations which had been "*constitutionally*" admitted should be permitted to continue their connection. The design of this rule was not seen at the time of its adoption, but it soon leaked out that Mr. Campbell's enemies had a man for Moderator who intended to apply the rule to the exclusion of the six congregations who had come in with the Campbells.

The plan was this : the constitution of the Redstone Association required a recognition of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith ; but these congregations had been

admitted under a special protest against all confessions of faith; therefore, the Moderator would rule that they had not been *constitutionally* received, and must be excluded from any further connection with the body. Alexander Campbell, having heard of the course that was to be taken, immediately proposed to the congregations under suspicion that they should peaceably withdraw, and thus avoid all further strife with the Redstone Association. This was agreed to, and before the next annual meeting they had all united with the Mahoning Association in Ohio. This union was one of complete harmony, and in a few years the Association dropped all of its peculiarities as a Baptist Association, and became identified with the new movement.

These facts are stated in order to give some idea of how the movement started, as well as to correct a public impression that Alexander Campbell was at one time excluded from the Baptists. He never was excluded, nor were the churches excluded which had been formed under the ministry of his father and himself. It is probable that they would have been excluded from the Redstone Association on the grounds stated, if they had not withdrawn in the meantime and united with the Mahoning Association.

It should be stated, furthermore, that the Campbells never intended to separate themselves from the Baptists. They made the change from the Redstone to the Mahoning Association simply to avoid an ugly controversy, and

probably a lasting feud. The step was entirely a prudential one, and in the interests of unity instead of division. However, the ill-feeling which had been cultivated in the Redstone Association became the starting-point of a persecution which finally forced the Campbells into a separate movement, though this was contrary to their wish. Undoubtedly their aim was to reform the Baptist churches, but not to separate from them. They believed that the Baptists were right in many things, and it was only necessary for them to drop their human creeds, and to act upon the principles set forth in the *Declaration and Address*, in order to be, in faith and practice, all that was necessary. But the ignorance of the Baptists at that time was only exceeded by their bigotry, and the result was that the Campbells were compelled to work independently of the Baptist churches.

Thus was started a great religious movement, which has gathered force from that day, until the Disciples of Christ, or Christians, as they are called individually, or Churches of Christ, as they are called collectively, number in the United States alone between 700,000 and 800,000 communicants. *And as the movement in this country grew out of the movement in America*, it may be well just here to give a comprehensive statement of the exact position of this religious people, in order that all may understand what was distinctly aimed at in the movement.

While the Disciples reject all human creeds as binding



in authority, they, nevertheless, regard it as a privilege to state for public information the particular points in which they agree with other religious bodies, as well as the points in which they differ from them. Consequently, some of their leading men have from time to time issued statements, in which are comprehended the main points of the plea which the Disciples have made.

The following is by the late Dr. Isaac Errett, one of their ablest preachers and writers, and is now generally accepted as a fair statement of their religious position. The pamphlet is entitled :—

## OUR POSITION.

### SECTION I.

A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE PLEA FOR A RETURN TO THE GOSPEL AND THE CHURCH OF APOSTOLIC TIMES, URGED BY THE PEOPLE KNOWN AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

In answer to numerous inquiries and requests, we deem it advisable to set forth, in brief and direct terms, a statement of the position and aims of the Disciples in their plea for a restoration of primitive Christianity. It will not require large space, as our design is not to argue, but simply to state our position. Under three heads we can easily present all that needs to be said :

*I. That in which we agree with the parties known as evangelical.*

*II. That in which we disagree with them all.*

*III. That in which we differ from some, but not from all of them.*

First, then, let us state that much is held by us in common with the parties known as evangelical ; nay, there is scarcely any-

thing recognised by them as essential or vital that is not as truly and as firmly held by us as by them. We are one with them in holding to and advocating the following items of doctrine :

1. The Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

2. The revelation of God, especially in the New Testament, in the tri-personality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

3. The alone-sufficiency and all-sufficiency of the Bible, as a revelation of the Divine character and will, and of the gospel of grace by which we are saved ; and as a rule of faith and practice.

4. The Divine excellency and worthiness of Jesus as the Son of God ; His perfect humanity as the Son of man ; and His official authority and glory as the Christ—the Anointed Prophet, Priest, and King, who is to instruct us in the way of life, redeem us from sin and death, and reign in and over us as the rightful Sovereign of our being, and Disposer of our destiny. We accept, therefore, in good faith, the supernatural religion presented to us in the New Testament, embracing in its revelations—

(1) The incarnation of the Logos—the eternal Word of God—in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

(2) The life and teachings of this divinely anointed Lord and Saviour, as the highest and completest unfolding of the Divine character and purposes, as they relate to our sinful and perishing race, and as an end of controversy touching all questions of salvation, duty, and destiny.

(3) The death of Jesus as a sin-offering, bringing us redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

(4) His resurrection from the dead, abolishing death and bringing life and immortality clearly to light.

(5) His ascension to heaven, and glorification in the heavens, where He ever liveth the Mediator between God and men—our great High Priest to intercede for His people ; and our King, to

rule until His foes are all subdued and all the sublime purposes of His mediatorial reign are accomplished.

(6) His supreme authority as Lord of all.

5. The personal and perpetual mission of the Holy Spirit, to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to dwell in believers as their Comforter, Strengtheners, and Sanctifier.

6. The alienation of the race from God, and their entire dependence on the truth, mercy, and grace of God, as manifested in Jesus the Christ, and revealed and confirmed to us by the Holy Spirit in the gospel, for regeneration, sanctification, adoption, and life eternal.

7. The necessity of faith and repentance in order to the enjoyment of salvation here, and of a life of obedience in order to the attainment of everlasting life.

8. The perpetuity of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as Divine ordinances, through all ages to the end of time.

9. The obligation to observe the first day of the week as the Lord's Day, in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, by acts of worship such as the New Testament teaches, and by spiritual culture such as befits this memorial day.

10. The Church of Christ, a Divine institution, composed of such as, by faith and baptism, have openly confessed the name of Christ; with its appointed rulers, ministers, and services, for the edification of Christians and the conversion of the world.

11. The necessity of righteousness, benevolence, and holiness on the part of professed Christians, alike in view of their own final salvation, and of their mission to turn the world to God.

12. The fulness and freeness of the salvation offered in the gospel to all who accept it on the terms proposed.

13. The final punishment of the ungodly by an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

These thirteen items certainly present a broad basis of agreement in conceptions of Divine truth which may rightfully be termed catholic. It would be passing strange that a people who hold heartily and unequivocally to these fundamental truths and principles should be regarded as unevangelical, did we not know the inveterateness of religious prejudice, and the inevitable lot of all who plead for religious reformation to be misunderstood and misrepresented. Time, however, wears away this prejudice, and as our opponents come out from the mist into a clearer view of the positions they have attacked, they try to believe that we have changed wonderfully from what we were, and are now *almost* orthodox! They can thus gracefully concede to us the present possession of truth without seeming to confess their own error in having misapprehended us in the past. But we pause not for controversy on this. It is not of so much importance to know who was right or wrong in the past, as to be sure who is right *now*. We have simply to say that we stand now where we have always stood on the points above stated. We presume not to say that no one among us has ever said anything subversive of any of the truths or principles we have enunciated; for in the controversies of fifty years it must be expected that some unripe or erratic minds would give utterance to some half-truths which are necessarily errors. Nor do we say that even the soundest advocates of our plea have not sometimes been tempted to indulge in partial views and ungrounded utterances. They must have been more than men had they escaped the operation of those laws of mind which govern it in breaking away from extremes, or when absorbed in the discussion of particular points of doctrine. The inevitable result is ultraism in a greater or less degree. But we do say, and wish to be emphatic in saying, that from the first day that this plea for a return to primitive Christianity began until this day, there has been no doubt and no controversy among its leading advocates, and none among the mass of its intelligent

adherents, on the thirteen points we have named. Not only have they accepted these teachings, but they have been ready at all times to advocate and defend them against all unbelievers and errorists.

We do not say this with any view to crave a place among the evangelicals. For ourselves, we look with increasing indifference on conventional standards of orthodoxy. It is a small thing to be judged by men. We desire to be found standing in the ranks of the honest advocates of truth, whether that advocacy lift us to the approval of the multitude, or sink us under the heaviest ban of the popular will. The frowns of men cannot kill, their smiles cannot save. Better to share the cross of Jesus than the approval of the multitudes that condemned Him. Let us not, therefore, be misunderstood. We write not to soften any angularities in our plea, or to win it favour by any compromise with the opposition. But where there is agreement, for the truth's sake we desire to be understood; and at a time when there is so much need for the united sympathy and labours of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, it is important to avoid all false issues, and urge no differences that are not real and serious.

We shall be better understood when we state the points of difference.

## SECTION II.

PARTICULARS IN WHICH WE DIFFER FROM ALL OTHERS, AND  
IN WHICH, CONSEQUENTLY, THE PECULIARITIES OF OUR  
PLEA MOST STRIKINGLY APPEAR.

1. While agreeing as to the Divine *inspiration* of the Old and New Testaments, we differ on the question of their equal binding *authority* on Christians. With us, the Old Testament was of authority with *Jews*, the New Testament *is now* of authority with *Christians*. We accept the Old Testament as true, and as

essential to a proper understanding of the New, and as containing many invaluable lessons in righteousness and holiness which are of equal preciousness under all dispensations ; but as a *book of authority* to teach *us* what *we* are to do, the New Testament alone, as embodying the teachings of Christ and His Apostles, is our standard.

2. While accepting fully and unequivocally the Scripture statements concerning what is usually called the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, we repudiate alike the philosophical and theological speculations of Trinitarians and Unitarians, and all unauthorised forms of speech on a question which transcends human reason, and on which it becomes us to speak "in words which the Holy Spirit teacheth." Seeing how many needless and ruinous strifes have been kindled among sincere believers by attempts to define the indefinable, and to make tests of fellowship of human forms of speech which lack Divine authority, we have determined to eschew all such mischievous speculations and arbitrary terms of fellowship, and to insist only on the "form of sound words" given to us in the Scriptures concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

3. While agreeing that the Bible furnishes an all-sufficient revelation of the Divine will, and a perfect rule of faith and practice, we disagree practically in this : *We act consistently with this principle*, and repudiate all human *authoritative* creeds. We object not to publishing, for information, what we believe and practise, in whole or in part, as circumstances may demand, with the reasons therefore. But we stoutly refuse to accept of any such statement as authoritative, or as a test of fellowship, since Jesus Christ alone is Lord of the conscience, and His word alone can rightfully bind us. What He has revealed and enjoined, either personally or by His Apostles, we acknowledge as binding ; where He has not bound us, we are free ; and we insist on standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, carefully

guarding against all perversions of said liberty into means or occasions of strife.

4. With us, the Divinity and Christhood of Jesus is more than a mere item of doctrine—it is the central truth of the Christian system, and in an important sense the Creed of Christianity. It is the one fundamental truth which we are jealously careful to guard against all compromise. To persuade men to trust and love and obey a Divine Saviour is the one great end for which we labour in preaching the gospel; assured that, if men are right about Christ, Christ will bring them right about everything else. We therefore preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We demand no other faith, in order to baptism and Church membership, than the faith of the heart in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God; nor have we any term or bond of fellowship but faith in this Divine Redeemer, and obedience to Him. All who trust in the Son of God and obey Him are our brethren, however wrong they may be about anything else; and those who do not trust in this Divine Saviour for salvation, and obey His commandments, are not our brethren, however intelligent and excellent they may be in all beside. Faith in the unequivocal testimonies concerning Jesus—His incarnation, life, teachings, sufferings, death for sin, resurrection, exaltation, and Divine sovereignty and priesthood, and obedience to the plain commands He has given us, are with us, therefore, the basis and bond of Christian fellowship. In judgments merely inferential we reach conclusions as nearly unanimous as we can; and where we fail, exercise forbearance, in the confidence that God will lead us into final agreement. In matters of expediency, where we are left free to follow our own best judgment, we allow the majority to rule. In matters of opinion—that is, matters touching which the Bible is either silent or so obscure in its revelations as not to admit of definite conclusions—we allow the largest liberty, so long as none judges his brother,

or insists on forcing his own opinions on others, or on making them an occasion of strife.

5. While heartily recognising the perpetual agency of the Holy Spirit in the work of conversion—or, to use a broader term, regeneration—we repudiate all theories of spiritual operations and all theories of the Divine and human natures which logically rule out the Word of God as the instrument of regeneration and conversion, or which make the sinner passive and helpless, regarding regeneration as a miracle, and leading men to seek the evidence of acceptance with God in supernatural tokens or special revelations, rather than in the definite and unchangeable testimonies and promises of the gospel. We require assent to no *theory* of regeneration, or of spiritual influence; but insist that men shall hear, believe, repent, and obey the gospel—assured that if we are faithful to God's requirements on the *human* side of things, He will ever be true to Himself and to us in accomplishing what is needful on the *Divine* side. Our business is to preach the gospel, and plead with sinners to be reconciled to God; asking God, while we plant and water, to give the increase. We care little for the logic of any theory of regeneration, if we may but persuade sinners to believe, repent, and obey.

6. While agreeing with all the evangelical in the necessity of faith and repentance, we differ in this: We submit *no other tests* but faith and repentance, in admitting persons to baptism and Church membership. We present to them no Articles of Faith other than the one article concerning the Divinity and Christhood of Jesus; we demand no narration of a religious experience other than is expressed in a voluntary confession of faith in Jesus; we demand no probation to determine their fitness to come into the Church; but instantly, on their voluntary confession of the Christ, and avowed desire to leave their sins and serve the Lord Christ, unless there are good reasons to doubt their sincerity, they are accepted and baptized, in the



name of the Lord Jesus, and *into* the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are thus wedded to *Christ*, and not to a set of doctrines or to a party.

7. We not only acknowledge the perpetuity of baptism, but insist on its meaning, according to the Divine testimonies: 'He that believeth and is baptized *shall be saved*.' 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins*, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' We therefore teach the believing penitent to seek, through baptism, the Divine assurance of the forgiveness of sins, and that gift of the Holy Spirit which the Lord has promised to them that obey Him. Thus, in a hearty and scriptural surrender to the authority of the Lord Jesus, and not in dreams, visions, or revelations, are we to seek for that assurance of pardon and that evidence of sonship to which the gospel points us.

The Lord's Supper, too, holds a different place with us from that which is usually allowed to it. We invest it not with the awfulness of a sacrament, but regard it as a sweet and precious feast of holy memories, designed to quicken our love of Christ and cement the ties of our common brotherhood. We therefore observe it as part of our regular worship, every Lord's Day, and hold it a solemn but joyful and refreshing feast of love, in which all the disciples of our Lord should feel it to be a great privilege to unite. 'Sacred to the memory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' is written on this simple and solemn family feast in the Lord's house.

8. The *Lord's Day*—not the Jewish Sabbath—is a New Testament observance, which is not governed by statute, but by apostolic example and the devotion of loyal and loving hearts.

9. *The Church of Christ*—not sects—is a Divine institution. We do not recognise sects, with sectarian names and symbols and terms of fellowship, as *branches* of the Church of Christ, but as unscriptural and anti-scriptural, and therefore to be abandoned

for the one Church of God which the New Testament reveals. That God has a people among these sects we believe; we call on them to come out from all party organisations, to renounce all party names and party tests, and seek only for *Christian* union and fellowship according to apostolic teaching. Moreover, while we recognise the seeming necessity for various denominational movements in the past, in the confusions growing out of the great apostasy, we believe that the time has now fully come to urge the evils and mischiefs of the sect spirit and sect life, and to insist on the abandonment of sect and a return to the unity of spirit and union and co-operation that marked the churches of the New Testament. We therefore urge the Word of God against human creeds; faith in Christ against faith in systems of theology; obedience to Christ rather than obedience to Church authority; the Church of Christ in place of sects; the promises of the Gospel instead of dreams, visions, and marvellous experiences as evidences of pardon; Christian character in place of orthodoxy in doctrine, as the bond of union; and associations for co-operation in good works instead of associations to settle questions of faith and discipline.

It will thus be seen that our differential character is found not in the advocacy of new doctrines or practices, but in rejecting that which has been added to the original simple faith and practice of the Church of God. Could all return to this, it would not only end many unhappy strifes and unite forces now scattered and wasted, but would revive the spirituality and enthusiasm of the early Church; as we should no longer need, as in the weakness of sectism, to cater to the world's fashions and follies to maintain a precarious existence. Zion could again put on her beautiful garments and shine in the light of God, and go out in resistless strength to the conquest of the world. To this end, we are not asking any to cast away their confidence in Christ, or to part with aught that is Divine; but to cast away that which is human, and

be one in clinging to the Divine. Is it not reasonable? Is it not just? Is it not absolutely necessary, to enable the people of God to do the work of God?

### SECTION III.

POINTS IN WHICH WE AGREE WITH SOME, BUT NOT WITH ALL.

1. In regard to immersion, we agree with all immersionists. The meaning of the Greek term; its literal and metaphorical uses in the New Testament; the incidental allusions to the primitive practice; the testimonies of ecclesiastical history as to the primitive practice; the testimonies of the leading reformers, such as Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, and the admission of a host of lexicographers and critics, by practice affusionists, but compelled as scholars to admit the truth as to the meaning of the word and the primitive practice,—these have led us to the definite and fixed conclusion that immersion is that which Christ ordained. Moreover, as an effort to restore the primitive *catholicity* of the Church is a prominent feature in our work, we could not be blind to the fact that immersion is catholic, while sprinkling and pouring are not. The advocates of affusion, while stoutly contending for it as scriptural, nevertheless admit that immersion also is baptism. Some do this on philological and historical grounds; but even the extremest advocates of affusion, while disputing the philological and historical arguments for immersion, still admit that it will be accepted, on the ground that the *form* is not essential to the *thing*. So it happily turns out that, by various routes, we can all reach an agreement respecting immersion as baptism, and respecting immersion *only*. We therefore hold to that which bears the stamp of catholicity, and reject that which lacks it.

2. Touching the *subject* of baptism, we are also in accord with baptist bodies, and at variance with Pedobaptists. Here, again,

we are on Catholic ground. There is no controversy as to the baptism of *believers* in Christ; the dispute relates entirely to the baptism of such as do not or cannot believe. Infant baptism lacks the stamp of catholicity; believers' baptism has it.

3. As to the *design* of baptism, we part company with Baptists, and find ourselves more at home on the other side of the house; yet we cannot say that our position is just the same with that of any of them. Baptists say that they baptize believers *because they are forgiven*, and they insist that they shall have the evidence of pardon before they are baptized. But the language used in the Scriptures declaring what baptism is for is so plain and unequivocal, that the great majority of Protestants, as well as Roman Catholics, admit it in their creeds to be, in some sense, for the remission of sins. The latter, however, and many of the former, attach to it the idea of regeneration, and insist that in baptism regeneration by the Holy Spirit is actually conferred. Even the Westminster Confession squints strongly in this direction, albeit its professed adherents of the present time attempt to explain away its meaning. We are as far from this ritualistic extreme as from the anti-ritualism into which the Baptists have been driven. With us, regeneration must be so far accomplished before baptism that the subject is changed in heart, and in faith and penitence must have yielded up his heart to Christ—otherwise baptism is nothing but an empty form. But *forgiveness* is something distinct from *regeneration*. Forgiveness is an act of the Sovereign—not a change of the sinner's heart; and while it is extended in view of the sinner's faith and repentance, it needs to be offered in a sensible and tangible form, such that the sinner can seize it and appropriate it with unmistakable definiteness. In baptism he *appropriates God's promise of forgiveness*, relying on the Divine testimonies: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins,

and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." 'He thus lays hold of the promise of Christ and appropriates it as his own. He does not *merit* it, nor *procure* it, nor *earn* it, in being baptized ; but he *appropriates* what the mercy of God has provided and offered in the gospel. We therefore teach all who are baptized that if they bring to their baptism a heart that renounces sin and implicitly trusts the power of Christ to save, they should rely on the Saviour's own promise—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

4. In regard to the beginning of the Church of Christ, there is a general agreement among leading theologians and ecclesiastical historians to date it from the day of Pentecost succeeding the resurrection of our Lord from the dead ; but this is not the view accepted by any of the religious parties as such. Pedobaptist Churches generally teach that the Jewish and Christian Churches are the same, the latter being merely an enlargement and improvement of the former. Baptists confine the Church of Christ to the New Testament, but many of them are disposed to date it from the ministry of John the Baptist. With us, it is held that the first Church of Christ was planted at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost referred to, of which we have an account in Acts ii. ; that the Jewish institution, with the authority of Moses as lawgiver, passed away when Jesus bowed His head on the cross and said, "It is finished ;" that the lawgiver, the covenant, the laws, the subjects, the promises of the new institution, are different from those of the old ; and that from that time onward the terms of salvation, the rules of life, the laws of association, the spirit and genius of religion, are to be learned from Christ and His Apostles, and only from Moses and the prophets as these point to those and prepare the way for them. The Bible, therefore, takes on very simple and easy divisions. The Old Testament is introductory to the New. The four Gospels present the knowledge of Jesus, and the evidences on which our faith in this

Divine Redeemer should rest. The Acts of the Apostles show how the gospel of salvation was preached and accepted—how sinners were made Christians, and were associated in churches as a spiritual brotherhood. The Epistles were addressed to *Christians*, furnishing a knowledge of Christian duties, rights, privileges, dangers, trials, and hopes, and preparing them unto all good works. The Apocalypse is supposed to deal with the fortunes and final destiny of the Church of Christ.

5. In point of Church government we agree in the main with Congregationalists and Baptists; but not altogether. The distinction of *clergy* and *laity* is not known among us. All Christians are royal priests to God. Preachers, teachers, and rulers are not a caste in any sense. For the sake of order and efficiency we have elders or bishops, deacons, and evangelists; yet in the absence of these our members are taught to meet, to keep the ordinances, and encourage each other to love and to good works, and may baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, or do whatever needs to be done to promote their own growth and the salvation of sinners. Nevertheless, as soon as suitable gifts are developed, persons are chosen to act as elders and deacons, and to serve in any other ministry the Church may need. The details of government and discipline are left largely with the elders, they being responsible to the Church for their doings.

We have no ecclesiastical courts, properly speaking, outside the individual churches; but it is becoming somewhat general now to refer difficult and unmanageable cases to a committee mutually agreed on by the parties concerned—their decision to be final. Our District, State, and National assemblies are not for the discussion or decision of matters of doctrine or discipline, but for co-operation in good works.

6. As it relates to the question of *union*, when this movement began, the plea for the union of Christians was peculiar to it. The growth of that sentiment, however, has been so extensive of

late years that it can no longer be said to be peculiar. One important feature of it remains with us as peculiar still. While there is a general confession of the evils of sectarianism, and a general desire to see a union of Christians brought about, no definite basis or plan of union has been presented. Here all are yet groping in the dark, and most are dreaming of attaining to a desirable *unity* without actual union—thus preserving their pet denominationalisms, and at the same time flattering themselves that they are getting away from sectarianism. We have, however, from the first, presented and practised on a definite plan of union. The presentation of this feature of our plea belongs to another chapter.

#### SECTION IV.

In closing this sketch, we wish to fix attention on our attitude to the Union question. There is now a very general acknowledgment of the evils and mischiefs, if not of the actual sin, of sectism. It has not always been so. When this plea for the restoration of primitive Christianity was first made, its prominent feature was a denunciation of the folly and wickedness of sects among Christians, and a plea for a restoration of the catholicity of the Apostolic Churches. This plea had but few sympathisers then. It was met with suspicion, with doubt, with indifference, with cavil and disputation, with storms of denunciation as an undesirable and Utopian scheme. There was a united opposition on the part of the denominations generally, because they saw that this doctrine struck at their very roots as denominations, and was directly antagonistical to everything that belonged to mere sect life. Within the last few years, however, a great revolution of public sentiment on this question has been developed. It is no longer necessary to argue, in most communities, the *desirableness* of Christian union ; that is freely

conceded—nay, more, it is eloquently and ably argued and illustrated by hundreds of tongues and pens in the various evangelical denominations.

Still it must be confessed that the union movement is in a nebulous state. The subject is handled by most writers in a gingerly way. There is painful evidence that the best minds are cramped by their ecclesiastical associations, and are groping after some scheme of union or of sect-affiliation, that will avoid the sacrifice of party idols, and enable sectarians to secure the blessings of a broader fellowship by paying down but part of the price.

The different phases of this movement may be thus stated :

1. The *Broad Church* phase. This, if we understand it—as it reveals itself in England—would leave all questions, even the most vital and fundamental, such as the Divinity of Christ and the inspiration of the Scriptures, open to all who, in a general way, will assent to the requirements of the Church of England, or any other State establishment, subject to whatever mental reservations may be necessary in each case ; and thus have a National Church ample enough and liberal enough in its provisions to meet the wants of all. While we see much to admire in the lives and labours of the gifted men who lend the influence of their powerful names to this scheme, we confess to a sort of disgust whenever we stop to think of the sordid *policy* which leads such men to cling to an establishment with whose doctrines and ritual they have no sympathy which would not die out in a day if their *livings* were not in question. It is, to say the very least, ungenerous to seek to subvert the very life of the institution on which they are dependent for the bread which gives strength to the hand that strikes the deadly blow at a mother's heart. It is not to the credit of the rationalism of this age that so many of its advocates are meanly subsisting and fattening on the spoils of a religion which they disbelieve, and allowing themselves to cling mercenarily to a false position. The



cause of God has nothing to hope for from a source so meanly selfish and corrupt.

2. The *Unity* phase—the abstract unionists. These regard *unity* as desirable, but *union* as impracticable. They advocate a moonshiny sentimentalism of catholicity of *spirit* which they are well assured cannot be realised in *life*. They propose that the sects remain undisturbed in their separate organisations and interests, and merely be put on their best behaviour toward each other. The highest aim they propose is a *confederation* of sects for general purposes, in which all agree, leaving all local and rival interests and opposing doctrines to adjust themselves as best they can. How far short this is of any scriptural model need not be argued here. We cannot forbear quoting the language of Isaiah, as finding a not inapt significance here, albeit the original design of it was altogether different: "Say ye not, a confederacy, to all to whom this people shall say, a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread."

3. The *Organic Union* phase. This finds varied expression. With some, it is simply the organic union of kindred sects on common denominational ground, or the making of one big sect out of several smaller ones; leaving further attempts to the subduing influences of time. With others, it is an earnest and avowed attempt to unite the leading evangelical denominations in one, simmering down their creeds into a few articles of concentrated orthodoxy such as all orthodox Christians can accept, and such as will serve at the same time to fence out all who are suspected of a want of orthodoxy.

From one point of view we sympathise with all these phases of the Union movement. We are glad of every utterance which tends to break down sectarian barriers; of every step which condemns the folly and weakness of denominationalism. It is perhaps

needful that just such preparatory measures should be adopted to open the way for something better. It is in the right direction, and the public mind, once led as far away from the old denominational landmarks as these leaders will conduct it, cannot well go back into the sectarian fastnesses of the past. But as a *consummation*, none of these proposed measures is devoutly to be wished. "They do but skin and film the ulcerous place." They fail to reach the roots of the disease, and they timidly propose no more than a temporary expedient.

Let us now state the doctrine of Christian Union as taught and practised by us.

1. It frankly avows not only the folly, but the *sin* of sectarianism, and teaches that, just as any other sin, it must be abandoned. It proposes no compromise whatever with denominationalism, but insists that party names, party creeds, and party organisations, being in direct contravention of the teachings of Christ, must be forsaken. It distinguishes between sects going away from the Church of God into Babylon, and sects coming back from Babylon, seeking to find the Church of God. With these latter it has much sympathy, and offers for their imperfect yet important and salutary movements in reformation many apologies. Still it insists that the return from Babylon to Jerusalem is incomplete so long as rival and jarring sects are found in place of the one Catholic Apostolical Church of primitive times.

2. It insists that unity and union are practicable; that in the first age of the Church our Lord and His Apostles did establish one grand spiritual brotherhood, and did embrace in it men of all classes and nationalities, however diverse or antagonistical their sentiments, tastes, and habits may previously have been; and that the Christless condition of society at that time presented much greater obstacles in the way of such a union than any that are found now among the professed followers of Christ. The difficulties should therefore be manfully met in the face and overcome.

3. It proposes simply a return, "in letter and in spirit, in principle and in practice," to the original basis of doctrine and of fellowship. Seeking after this it finds—

(1) That all who put their trust in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and for His sake left their sins and renounced all other lordships, were at once accepted as worthy to enter this fellowship. *Faith in the Divine Lord and Saviour was the one essential condition of entrance.* None could enter without faith—infant membership was therefore impossible. None who had faith could be refused admission—no other test was allowed but that of faith in and submission to Jesus, the Christ. We therefore proclaim, in opposition to all big and little creeds of Christendom, *that the original creed has but one article of faith in it, namely: That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.* All doctrinal tests but this must be abandoned.

(2) That all such believers were admitted into this fellowship by baptism, upon the authority of Jesus Christ, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. We have said, in a former chapter, that there ought to be no stumbling here if there is indeed a desire for union; since all admit that immersion is baptism, and nothing else is admitted by all. It can only be the stubbornness of the sect-spirit that prevents union in that which all can accept. The only real difficulty here in the way relates to those who have received pouring or sprinkling in adult years, and have conscientious scruples about repeating, as they would regard it, an obedience already rendered. These, however, are exceptional cases, and would soon adjust themselves if it were once settled that nothing should hereafter be practised but that which all agree to be sufficient.

(3) That among these baptized believers there was no spiritual caste—no distinction of clergy and laity; but all were brethren, and none was to be called Master or Father. The order of the Church must harmonize with this. Nothing must be insisted on

as of Divine authority, or be made a test of fellowship, for which there is not a *thus saith the Lord*, in express precept or approved precedent.

4. In all matters where there is no express precept or precedent, the law of love should lead us to that which will promote edification and peace.

(a) In matters merely inferential, unanimity is to be sought, but not forced.

(b) In matters merely prudential, the majority should rule, care being had, however, not to transcend the limits of expediency by contravening any Divine precept; and regard always being had to the prejudices and the welfare of all.

(c) Where Christ has left us free, no man has a right to judge his brother. The largest liberty is here allowed, limited only by the spirit of the apostolic teaching: "If meat cause my brother to stumble, I will eat no meat while the world stands."

Such is, in brief, what we propose as a basis of union. We have no desire for mere organic union any faster than a supreme love for Christ leads to unity of spirit, and prepares men for the voluntary sacrifice of all but Christ.

We have no faith in the practicability of uniting sects on any merely sectarian basis, however liberal. It cannot be Christian union unless it is union in Christ—in that which Christ enjoins, neither less nor more. The present unwillingness, with all the prevalent union sentiment, to abandon sectarian names and interests, proves how unavailing all attempts at a union of parties, as such, must prove. We do not, therefore, propose the union of sects; but call on all the people of God in the various sects to come out from them and unite in the faith and practice of the New Testament. We propose in this way to subvert sectarianism—calling the lovers of Jesus out from sects, and leavening those who refuse to come with the doctrine of the New Testament, until they too shall be ready to give up sect for Christ.

## SECTION V.

## OBJECTIONS TO OUR POSITION.

There are some objections to the plan of union on which we are acting which deserve attention.

I. That while we profess to repudiate everything sectarian and to advocate only that which is catholic, we do practically establish a sectarian test—admitting none but those who accept our *interpretation* of the meaning of baptism. An affusionist is not allowed to have his own interpretation, but must bend to ours.

This, if true, would be a serious objection. But, in truth, it is not with us a question of *interpretation* at all, but of *translation*. We propose to unite with all believers in Christ Jesus *on the Word of God*—to accept what it teaches, and do what it commands. As the Word of God was not originally spoken or written in English, we must have it translated in such words as will faithfully convey “the mind of the Spirit.” What we insist on is, that *baptizo* is not fairly represented in English by pour, or sprinkle, or wash, but by dip, plunge, immerse. This being so, a faithful translation leaves no necessity for party interpretation as to the thing required to be done. We repeat, therefore, that we impose our interpretations on none ; we simply ask that the Word of God shall be faithfully translated. The question is philological.

If it be said that there is doubt as to the proper translation of the original term, we reply : No more doubt than can be raised over any other term that men may choose to dispute about ; not so much as may be plausibly urged against many other leading terms in the New Testament, and none that can present a serious obstacle to union, provided the *spirit* of union is in the ascendant. This will be apparent in the light of the following statements :

I. All the lexicographers of note give dip, plunge, immerse, as the literal meaning of *baptizo*.

2. Ecclesiastical history clearly proves not only that immersion was the primitive practice, but that it continued to be the general practice for over twelve centuries.

3. The Greek Church has always practised it, and continues to practise it to this day.

4. The Western or Roman Catholic Church freely admits that the original practice was immersion, and does not pretend to base its present practice on the meaning of the word, or the authority of Scripture; but claims that the *Church* has authority to change the ordinances. Both affusion and infant membership are maintained on the ground of *tradition*, by the Roman Catholics, it being freely admitted that they are not to be proved from Scripture alone.

5. Affusion and infant membership obtained a footing among the Reformers *as an inheritance from Rome*, and not on the ground of Scripture authority. They imported them from Babylon as the fruits of their religious training, found themselves in possession of them, and were put to it to find some authority from Scripture to justify them.

6. Luther, Calvin, and Wesley all admitted frankly that immersion was the apostolic practice. Calvin justified sprinkling on the ground that the Church had the authority to modify the *form* somewhat, retaining the *substance*; but, he added, "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and *it is certain* that immersion was the practice of the ancient Church.

7. Immersion was that which the rubric of the Church of England required at the time the Presbyterians came into power in England and formed their Directory for Public Worship. They changed it so as to read that sprinkling was not only lawful, but sufficient, and carried it by the casting vote of the Moderator—no one presuming to deny the lawfulness of immersion.

When we add to these considerations what we said in a previous number—that immersion can be accepted by all as

valid baptism—it will be seen that we are neither attempting to impose an interpretation on any, nor to tyrannise over the conscience of any. We insist on that which the Word of God enjoins, and which all can accept without a sacrifice of conscience.

II. It is objected that the creed which we submit is too broad—it will let in heretics of various stripes, and the Church will soon be loaded down with an intolerable burden of error.

To this we reply :

1. That the question to be met is not, Is this good policy ? or, What will come of it ?—let such inquiries be put when nothing more sacred than mere expedients are in question—but, Was this the primitive practice ? Is this what the Apostles taught ? It is beyond controversy that, in preaching the gospel and turning sinners to Christ, the Apostles knew and were determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It is equally certain that they received sinners to baptism, upon their avowed faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Is it not impious on our part to question the wisdom of heaven's arrangements and ordinations ? How dare we impose either doctrinal or practical barriers where they imposed none ?

2. The human inventions by which it has been sought to keep out heresy and heretics have not been successful. They have made more heresy than they have cured or prevented, and, in place of preventing the increase of parties, have been the fruitful sources of division. If sometimes they have kept out those who were unsound in the faith, have they not also kept out many of whom God would accept—kept them out because they could not accept the traditions of men ? The practical result of human tests is not seen in a united nor yet in a pure church, but quite the reverse.

3. If men are ever persuaded to love and trust in Jesus as a Divine Saviour, they can readily be brought right about all else. The normal development of the love of Christ as the sovereign

power in the<sup>e</sup>soul will conquer and annihilate errors much more readily than the assertion of merely human authority or a formal assent to Church dogmas. The early converts to Christianity had many errors in possession, as is evident from the New Testament history ; but the Apostles evidently trusted that they would outgrow them as rapidly as they advanced in the knowledge and love of Christ. They therefore left them undisturbed in their possession *so long as they did not seek to impose them on others*, or so long as these errors did not subvert their faith in Christ. The Apostles were jealous of everything that would move men's confidence away from Christ or supplant His authority ; they were tolerant in all beside. Let us quote here the words of another :

“Put Christ in your temple, and whatever ought not to be there will depart at His bidding. Is your congregation disturbed by the presence of birds or beasts that defile it? Open the door to Him and give Him full possession, for He alone has the power to drive them out. Is the temple of your heart infested with the beasts of selfishness, which show their presence in the works of the flesh? You cannot expel them by your will alone. Put Christ in your temple.

“There are yet those who are vainly trying to cleanse the temple of its falsehood by a scourge of small cords of doctrine spun out of their own brain. There are those who are seeking to expel from churches organs, festivals, etc., by the force of their own personal menaces ; and there are not wanting those who are seeking to cleanse their own lives by their low keeping in their own strength. Put Christ in your temples, and whatever ought not to be there He will drive out.”\*

4. It may be possible to unite men in the faith and love of Jesus, the Christ, so as to have one common brotherhood in all

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\* Alex Procter.



the earth, inspired by a common faith, and hope, and love ; but it is not possible to establish a catholic brotherhood on any creed of man's devising. The really catholic Church—the only true catholic Church—that of the first and second centuries—had no human creed.

III. It is objected that there is much beyond the Divinity of Christ taught in the Scriptures, and that, if Christians are to be properly instructed, the truths of the Bible must be faithfully taught.

Answer :

1. Unquestionably. These truths, disciples are to learn *after they come into the Church*, but they are not tests by which they are admitted. Teachers should fully instruct the Church in all that the Bible teaches, but the members are not bound to receive such instructions any further than they see them established by Scripture testimony. But if the teacher becomes heretical—what then? Let the Church cease to employ him in that capacity.

2. There is a class of speculative questions which cannot enter into the teaching of the pulpit, and which can have no proper place in a creed, because they are not questions of *faith*, but of *opinion* ; yet their discussion may, in a philosophical point of view, be valuable. All these questions should be relegated to the schools of philosophy where they belong, and there should be freely discussed without danger of ecclesiastical interference.

IV. It is objected that the clashing interests of the various systems of Church government will not allow of union.

We reply that when the spirit of Christ shall become superior to the pride of sect, no question of Church polity will be allowed to divide Christians. Church government does not stand among the terms of salvation. If, as is generally argued, the Scriptures give us no definite form of Church government, and therefore these various forms have grown up according to necessity, it is

evident that \*they can *come down* again according to a new necessity; and he is not acting as a Christian who would allow anything not Divine to stand in the way of the union of the people of God. We do not care to discuss this question more particularly now, because we are satisfied that when all other grave difficulties shall have been overcome, this one will not long be allowed to stand.

V. We can never unite in non-essentials.

True; and it would not be worth much if we did. That is just the line we draw. In essentials—in that which is plainly taught and ordained as the will of God, we must be one; in non-essentials—in all that Christ has not taught and enjoined—we must be left free, guided only by that law of love which will ever lead us to seek the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Of course the foregoing statements must not be taken as exhaustive of all the special matters to which Disciples have called attention. To put their whole plea in a word, they claim to have been fighting the battle of religious FREEDOM. More than anything else they have contended for this. But as they have believed the Word of God is practically the best charter of religious freedom, they have defended it as a sufficient rule of faith and practice against all human creeds and confessions of faith. They have, from the very beginning of their movement, most earnestly advocated the importance of Christian unity, but they have contended that this unity is impossible until the paramount *authority* of the Word of God is fully recognised in all religious matters. In the early days of the movement, Mr. Campbell declared that "Christian

unity can result from nothing short of the destruction of human creeds and confessions of faith, inasmuch as human creeds and confessions of faith have destroyed Christian unity." He furthermore declared that "when-ever the setting aside of creeds and confessions of faith shall be attempted, Christians will give to the world, and to angels, and to themselves, proof that they do believe the Word of God."

Around these principles the Disciples have fought their battles with the world, the various sects, denominations, and churches of Christendom ; and it can scarcely be denied that they have impressed their movement upon the age in a much more emphatic manner than many suppose. Not only has the whole of religious society in America been deeply impressed by the Disciple movement, but its influence has gone to many other parts of the world, and, as has already been stated, had made considerable impression in this country at the time Mr. Coop became acquainted with the churches here that had grown out of the teachings of Mr. Campbell.

## CHAPTER IX.

### GROWTH AND SPIRIT OF THE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

**I**T is rather a remarkable thing that a religious movement should be started in a country simply from the influence of the *writings* of a man. Usually it is necessary to unite personal magnetism with argument and persuasion in order to secure a following. But it seems that this was not the case as regards the matter under consideration.

The origin of the movement here may be briefly stated as follows. Mr. William Jones of London was the first to introduce amongst the Baptists some of the writings of the Disciples of America, and especially the writings of Alexander Campbell. He differed in a few particulars from some of the teaching of Mr. Campbell, but seemed to accept most heartily the main things in the plea which had been made in America. However, after the movement had taken a little root here, Mr. Jones found that he was likely to come in conflict with his own brethren if he continued to advocate the new movement, and, consequently, he went back into the Baptist ranks, and continued there until his death.

Meantime, however, as has already been intimated,

Mr. James Wallis of Nottingham started the *Christian Messenger*. Through this periodical, and by such active workers as we have seen Mr. Coop to be, the movement gained strength, until at the first general meeting of the churches of Great Britain and Ireland, held at Edinburgh in 1842, the number of churches in the United Kingdom was reported forty-two, and the number of members in these churches was set down at thirteen hundred.

These statements are substantiated by the annual report of the General Evangelistic Committee of the Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland, made in August 1883. This report is made just fifty years after the beginning of the movement in this country. It says :—

“ It seems suitable and desirable that in this year’s Report an incident should be mentioned which happened just fifty years ago, and which was the means a kind Providence used for introducing into our land reformation principles that had been for some time previously successfully advocated in America.

“ At that time there was a small Scotch Baptist Church located in Windmill Street, Finsbury Square, London, presided over by two venerable but energetic men, nearly eighty years of age. It was not often that strangers found their way into this unpretentious building ; and when, during the summer months of 1833, a young man of fair complexion, medium height, and of a sprightly appearance entered during public worship and took his seat near the pulpit, it awakened some curiosity.

“ At the close of the service he entered into conversation with one of the elders, who was none other than William Jones, the well-known author of the *Biblical Cyclopædia*, *History of the Waldenses*, and many other works, and communicated to him the

following particulars: His name was Peyton C. Wyeth, an American, from Pennsylvania. He was an artist, and had come to Europe to improve himself in his profession. Having in the first instance taken up his residence in Paris, he had brought no letters of introduction to any person in England, not expecting to visit this country. He had, at that time, been several weeks in London, and on the Lord's Days had wandered about in search of some church in which he could hear the same doctrine, and find the same order of worship observed, to which he had been accustomed in his native land; but wherever he went he found himself sorely disappointed. It had pleased God, on that day, to conduct him into the chapel in Windmill Street, where he at once found himself at home, and delighted to see Disciples worshipping God according to New Testament order.

"Mr. Jones, finding him to be an intelligent and well-informed young man, of pleasant manners, and very communicative, took every opportunity of obtaining information from him respecting the state of religion in the United States. He told of brethren with whom he was connected there, who were labouring for a restoration of New Testament Christianity, taking nothing but the Bible for their rule and guide; and being requested to name some of the leaders in this movement, Mr. Jones was surprised to hear that the first name mentioned was that of Alexander Campbell, whom he knew as the able antagonist of Robert Owen, but had not the slightest suspicion his views on Divine truth and primitive worship were so congenial with his own.

"'The information now given me' (writes Mr. Jones) 'concerning Mr. Campbell, his more abundant labours in spreading abroad a savour of the knowledge of Christ, both from the pulpit and the press, his intrepidity and zeal, the talents conferred upon him by the exalted Head of the Church, and his powerful advocacy of the cause of primitive Christianity, all gladdened my heart, and made me ardently long to be introduced to his

acquaintance before we quitted this stage of life. I became increasingly solicitous to know what was the probable number of persons now living in America who might be considered as having received the apostolic testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, and had been baptized in His name. What was the probable number of Churches gathered by the apostolic doctrine, and various other matters relating to the Kingdom of our Redeemer, and its advancement in that quarter of the world. And, that I might obtain the fullest and most satisfactory evidence respecting these points, I requested the favour of Mr. Wyeth to write to Mr. Campbell, with whom he told me he was intimately acquainted, as Mr. Campbell's residence, which is Bethany, Virginia, is within fourteen miles of Claysville, the place of his nativity. He accordingly wrote a letter, under my own roof, and in a great measure from my dictation.'

"This letter was the beginning of a lengthy correspondence, and resulted in Mr. Jones obtaining all the literature then published by Alexander Campbell, and a determination forthwith to begin a periodical, called the *Millennial Harbinger*, in order to circulate this good news and these writings amongst the Scotch Baptists in Great Britain. How it came to pass that a reformation movement which included many thousands of Disciples should have been in progress so many years, on the opposite shore of the Atlantic, and yet be unknown to the religious world in this country, and above all to a man of literature like William Jones, we cannot tell. But in due time God made this man His instrument for bringing the light which had been shining elsewhere into our own land. And, although he lacked the moral courage to continue the good work thus begun, yet there were others ready to take up that which he had thrown down; and, as time has rolled on, the work has had its measure of prosperity; the churches have slowly increased; and the denominations surrounding them have begun to realise the value of their plea.

“ But it would be a mistake to suppose that there were no germs of reformation in the United Kingdom before Mr. Jones began the publication of his *Millennial Harbinger* ; for a careful glance through our early magazines reveals the fact that several churches, in various places, arose about the same time, and previous to obtaining any knowledge of Mr. Campbell and his work. These were, for the most part, unknown to each other, but were teaching and upholding the same things. In the North, were Auchtermuchty and Grangemouth ; in the South, Bristol and probably London ; and between these distant points were found churches in Coxlane, Wrexham, and Shrewsbury ; also, one in Dungannon, Ireland, about which, as well as of some of the others, an interesting story could be told. These churches stood isolated for years, but steadfast in the Apostles’ doctrine, the fellowship, the prayers, the teaching, and breaking of bread on every first day of the week ; and each, in turn, was equally surprised and pleased to find it was not alone in pleading for a restoration of the ancient order. How these churches came to exist may be accounted for by the fact that during the greater part of the eighteenth, and the early part of the nineteenth, century the Spirit of God had been moving the minds of such men as Glas, Sandeman, Walker, M’Lean, the Haldanes, and others, to plead for a restoration of the pure Gospel. And by these instrumentalities the Lord prepared the way for the reception, in our own land, of the more complete restoration pleaded for by Alexander Campbell.”

It is well to state just here that the movement in this country, from the very beginning, differed somewhat from what it was in the United States. The same teaching had been transferred from America to Europe, but the *spirit* of this teaching was not the same when the



books, periodicals, and pamphlets had come in contact with the different type of religious development in the Old World. This different spirit was partly due to the fact that, among the first adherents in this country, to the principles advocated by Mr. Campbell and his associates, were a number of Scotch Baptists, whose rigid views of Church fellowship, and whose unyielding determination to carry every principle to its strictly logical consequence, at once fastened upon the movement a type from which it has never entirely recovered.

Nor was this all. The difference in religious society here, as compared with what it is in America, had much to do with developing what seemed to be an illiberal spirit among the churches of the new movement. There were at least three points where this apparent illiberal tendency manifested itself.

First, as regards the ministry of the Word. A State Church was felt by the churches to be altogether contrary to the teaching of the New Testament, and the system of priesthood which this State Church fosters was regarded as absolutely antagonistic to the order of the churches in the apostolic times. The result of this conviction was a tendency to go to another extreme. In repudiating a special class, denominated the clergy, it can scarcely be doubted that the movement lost both the scriptural authority for, and the efficiency of, a class of men whose special duty it is to proclaim the gospel and educate the Disciples. In other words the churches in

this country<sup>•</sup> carried to an extreme the doctrine which Mr. Campbell had clearly enunciated, viz. that there ought to be no distinction made such as "clergy and laity," but which enunciation was always more or less modified by the further statement that everything should be done to "edification," and, consequently, "decently and in order."

Out of this reaction from an intense clericalism, the "Churches of Christ" developed what is popularly known as the practice of "Mutual Teaching." And this notion was largely emphasised by a number of persons who united in the movement, who had been deeply impressed by the Haldanes of Scotland. But it ought to be intimated that while the churches were feeble and unable to sustain educated teachers, it was perhaps well enough that they should seek to maintain themselves by the system of mutual teaching, and especially as there was behind this the deep conviction that the system was eminently scriptural. Without this conviction it is perhaps doubtful whether an expedient of this sort would have been efficient at all. But when it was sustained by a deep persuasion that it was in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures, that which would have been impracticable without this persuasion became now, under its influence, very potential, in not only providing the churches with some kind of spiritual help, but in many cases carrying forward the work with considerable rapidity, by making these teachers evangelists to preach the gospel as well as for the edification of those who were already Disciples.

But the mischief was in fixing this early practice, which was perhaps a necessity at the time, upon the churches as *a distinct and unmistakable revelation of Divine order*. The result has been disastrous to the movement here in many respects. It is said to have practically driven out of the churches into other bodies a number who gave considerable promise of usefulness in the ministry, and who would have greatly assisted to make the movement a success, had they been allowed to remain where they were.

In America the movement began somewhat as it did here, but as the churches grew in strength, and as the movement spread, it was found that some of the early methods must be modified. And, consequently, the habit of mutual teaching, in the extreme sense in which it is understood in this country, began to give place to pastors who were specially appointed to "feed the flock of God." And now most of the churches in America are supplied with regular ministers, though these ministers have associated with them elders or bishops, who do not specially "labour in word and doctrine."

Another point of difference in the movement here, as compared with America, was in the refusal of many of the churches here to receive contributions from persons who were not in fellowship. This was sometimes carried to such an extent that in a few places notices were put up to the effect that no one should contribute except those who were known to be Christians. At the same time,

some of the places of public worship were so divided as that the Christians were located in a certain defined part of the house, while those who were considered as *outsiders* were placed in seats specially designated for their use. This exclusive spirit was occasionally carried still further, by writing in the hymn books used in the chapels the intimation that no one not a Christian was expected to sing.

In America the Disciples never gave much, if any, attention to such matters as have been here described. It was held from the beginning that money properly used would accomplish good results, no matter from whom it came or from what motive contributed. Indeed, there were not a few who contended that if *outsiders*, as they were called, chose to voluntarily contribute to any Christian enterprise, it was just that much gain to religious power, and that much loss to Satan. It was held that to "use the world as not abusing it," was not only scriptural but good policy. Those who carefully thought about the matter were unwilling to place themselves in the attitude of beggars to the world in order to support the Church ; but it was always conceded that if any who were not Church members chose to contribute their contribution should not be rejected.

The practice of the churches in this country, as regards the Communion question, has been more or less strict, though it may be questioned as to whether many of the churches gave special attention to this matter in the beginning of the movement. It is probable that, as most of the churches

were small in 1845, the time when Mr. Coop became acquainted with them, they were not troubled much about the Communion question. Many of their meetings were held in private houses, and the morning or Communion meetings were attended only by members of the church ; while the evening service was devoted to the proclamation of the gospel, either in these private houses, or in some hall, or at some outdoor place. But whatever may have been the case, it is certain that this question of strict or open communion began to agitate the churches as soon as the question of inviting Mr. Campbell to visit this country became prominently discussed. However, it will be presently seen that Strict Communion views were not necessary in order to hearty co-operation with the churches.

As early as the first general meeting of the churches at Edinburgh, in August 1842, to which reference has already been made, the question of inviting evangelists from America to labour in this country was considered. At that meeting the question of a forward movement was earnestly discussed. Perhaps this was stimulated by the earnest words of George C. Reid, the first evangelist who had ever laboured for the brethren. Mr. Reid was a man of much ability, and had resigned a lucrative and important position in another communion in order to identify himself with the new movement. He soon saw the needs of the churches. His great brave heart felt that very little comparatively was being accomplished, owing to a want of evangelistic enterprise. Consequently, in 1841, he

issued an address to the brethren, from which the following extract is taken. He says :—

“We want a correct co-operative plan for bringing out and continuing in the field of labour efficient men to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. In what state are the Scotch Baptist Churches in consequence of their supineness, after so many years' existence? At death's door! and shall we follow in their wake? Every grateful heart says, No, no—never! In what state would the Reformation in America have been now but for the exertions of their zealous and self-denying proclaimers? and shall Britons lag behind? The simultaneous shout, we hear even now, is ‘We will go forward.’ Yes, and we have every reason to anticipate a glorious victory. We will, therefore, suggest that the elderships of the Nottingham and the Dundee Churches be requested to take this matter into their care and consideration, and that all those congregations that desire this thing to go forward should correspond with the said elders on the subject, and suggest the means by which it may be best executed. I state this, not because I have wanted any good thing in moderation; no, the brethren have supplied all my wants and those of my family while I have been absent from them. But I have other and weighty reasons for proposing this plan. *First*, we ought to prevent rather than cure an evil; and it is possible these supplies might increase to over abundance, and if they did not, others might take an undue advantage of it. I have no desire to make riches of the gospel. But, *second*, others might be brought forward had we the means; and do you not desire it? I should like to see two, ten, yea, a hundred engaged in the same work I am now performing. And, *third*, some of the churches are very poor, and therefore unwilling to send for a messenger to visit them because of the expense. Unite your strength, and this also can be accomplished. Let us quit ourselves like men.”

This was the key-note for the Edinburgh meeting. All felt the necessity of making a forward movement, and in accordance with this feeling a resolution was passed recommending the continuance of present arrangements for preaching the Gospel, but at the same time to secure, if possible, a supply of evangelists from America, while a cordial invitation should be sent to Alexander Campbell to visit this country.

There was no other general meeting of the churches until 1847, but from 1842 to 1847 there was considerable discussion about the importance of securing American evangelists, as well as in arranging for the visit of Mr. Campbell, who was invited in a formal letter sent him January 22nd, 1846. As this discussion has important bearings upon the Communion question, it may be well to notice the form it took and some of the facts connected with it.

In 1844, some extracts from the Campbell and Rice debate were published in the *Christian Messenger and Family Magazine*; and it furthermore appears that in December of the same year an article appeared in the *Christian Magazine*, published in London, calling attention to the fact that Alexander Campbell had changed his views on the question of Communion. This article was copied into the *Millennial Harbinger* for March 1845, a monthly periodical which Mr. Campbell edited and published in America, to which he appended a reply. Both the article and Mr. Campbell's reply are copied, in

order that all may see and understand the beginning of this controversy on the Communion question.

GOOD NEWS.—A. CAMPBELL'S CHANGE OF VIEWS.

“A. Campbell now advocates the propriety of not rejecting from the Lord's table an unbaptized believer. This he once opposed. His views will be found below. Elder Jones, of London, had written this question to A. Campbell, in his *Harbinger*, ‘Do any of your churches admit unbaptized persons to Communion in the Lord's Supper, a practice that is becoming very prevalent in this country?’ To this question A. Campbell replies, ‘*Not one as far as known to me.*’ But since then, as the following extracts will show, both he and the churches have become less sectarian, and more Christian in their views. ‘But who is a Christian?’ he asks. I answer, ‘Everyone who believes in his heart that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of God; repents of his sins, and obeys Him in all things according to his measure of knowledge of His will. I cannot, therefore, make any one duty the standard of Christian state or character, not even immersion into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and in my heart regard all that have been sprinkled in infancy, without their own knowledge and consent, as aliens from Christ and the well-grounded hope of heaven. Salvation was of the Jews, acknowledged the Messiah; and yet He said of a foreigner, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a Syro-Phœnician, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.”’

“‘Should I find a Pedobaptist more intelligent in the Christian Scriptures, more spiritually-minded, and more devoted to the Lord than a Baptist, or one immersed on a profession of the ancient faith, I could not hesitate a moment in giving the preference of my heart to him that loveth most. Did I act otherwise I should be a pure sectarian, a Pharisee among Christians. Still I should be asked, How do I know that anyone loves



my Master, but by his obedience to His commandments? I answer, *In no other way.* But mark, I do not substitute obedience to one commandment for universal, or even general obedience; and should I see a sectarian Baptist, or a Pedobaptist, more spiritually-minded, more generally conformed to the requisitions of the Messiah, than one who precisely acquiesces with me in the theory or practice of immersion as I teach, doubtless the former, rather than the latter, would have my cordial approbation and love as a Christian. So I judge, and so I feel. It is the image of Christ the Christian looks for and loves; and this does not consist in being exact in a few items, but in general devotion to the whole truth, as far as known.

“With me, mistakes of the understanding and errors of the affections are not to be confounded; they are as distant as the poles. An angel may mistake the meaning of a commandment, but he will obey it in the sense in which he understands it. John Bunyan and John Newton were very different persons, and had very different views of baptism, and some other things, yet they were both disposed to obey, and, to the extent of their knowledge, did obey, the Lord in everything. Now, unless I could prove that all who neglect the positive institutions of Christ, and have substituted something else of human authority, do it knowingly, or, if not knowingly, are voluntarily ignorant of what is written, I could not, I dare not say, that their mistakes are such as unchristianise all their professions.”—(*Millennial Harbinger.*)

“The English Baptists very generally practise Open Communion, as they call it. They invite persons unbaptized to participate with them at the Lord’s Table. Now the difference between them and our brethren, in cases where such persons commune with them, is this: they do not invite them as such to commune in the Supper; but some of them sometimes say that the table is the *Lord’s*, and not theirs; and that though they cannot invite any one to partake of it, but those visibly and

ostensibly, by their own baptism, the Lord's people, still, not presuming to say that those only are the Lord's people in this day of division, we debar no consistent professor of the faith of any party, who, *upon his own responsibility*, chooses to partake with us. Thus we throw the responsibility upon him, while the English Baptists, in many instances, take it upon themselves. I argue not the merits of this question here, I only exhibit in evidence that our liberality, as it is called, goes beyond the most strict sects of the Pedobaptists."—(Discussion with N. L. Rice, 798.)

"In stating their foundation he says, page 809: 'It embraces all that believe in Jesus as the Christ of all nations, sects, and parties, and makes them all one in Christ Jesus.'

"There may be ten or one hundred congregations that have made that matter (Open Communion) a question; the great majority, as far as I know, have not. A few cases, such as I have described before, have occurred, and *I have witnessed them with some degree of satisfaction.*"—(*Ibid*, p. 810.)

"It may be expected that these altered views will have a salutary effect on the admirers of his writings. They will be led to reconsider the great question of Christian Union."

#### A. CAMPBELL'S REPLY.

"If I was asked the question in the year of Christ 1845, 'Do any of your churches admit unbaptized to communion?' I would still answer, 'Not one, as far as known to me,' if it were added, as Elder Jones added to the above question—'a practice that is becoming very prevalent in this country.' We have no such *practice*. Professors of unblemished reputation, of Pedobaptist churches, are sometimes informed at our large meetings, *that we do not suppose all unimmersed persons to be absolute aliens from the family of God, nor are they absolutely excluded from any participation with us in prayer or in the Lord's Supper; on the contrary, if any of them take upon himself the responsibility, being*

*satisfied in himself of his own baptism, to participate with us at a table which is not ours, but the Lord's, we have no power to forbid him, and would not withhold from him the symbolic loaf and cup.* But to make it a *practice* to receive such persons as members of our churches into regular communion, is a practice unknown to me in any one church in the Reformation. There is not, indeed, in the extracts furnished from the Rice Discussion, nor in any passage of my writings, so far as remembered by me, a single sentence indicative of such a '*practice*.'

"I am still pleased, indeed, to see Pedobaptists of good Christian character occasionally take upon themselves the responsibility to break the loaf with us in commendation of their love to their Saviour and to us, because such persons, on a more intimate acquaintance, generally become disciples of Christ, or withdraw from such intimacy. Cannot the editor of the *Christian Magazine* distinguish between an act of hospitality to a stranger, and the *practice* of inviting all strangers to become members of the family—between Paul's circumcising Timothy and circumcising every other half-bred Jew who embraced Christian faith—between taking upon himself once a Jewish vow, and assuming the whole code of Levitical and Jewish rites—between saying *amen* to a Christian prayer, and acquiescing in all the ceremonies of the Church of England?

"I am also of opinion, that I have more good reasons and scriptural authority for refusing communion with many immersed persons than for refusing Christian communion with some unimmersed but very exemplary followers of the Lamb. Still, should anyone persist in treating immersion as a human tradition, with whom I might have communed on several occasions, after that he had opportunity of better instruction, and indicated an uncandid temper, I would say to him that I could not, in good conscience, invite him to participate with me in any Christian institution."

Both of the preceding articles were copied into the May number of the *Christian Messenger*, 1845, edited by Mr. James Wallis, and published from Nottingham, and in which magazine, as already stated, the objectionable clause from the Campbell and Rice debate had been printed the year before. So it will be seen that Mr. Campbell's views were printed in the *Christian Messenger*, and circulated here, *more than a year before the invitation was sent to him to visit this country*. And yet, in face of his plain teaching in opposition to Strict Communion, both in his debate with Mr. Rice and also in his reply to the article published in the *Christian Magazine*, the following reference is made, in the Report of the Evangelists' Committee to the churches, in the *Christian Messenger* for July 1845: "The question now comes, What shall we next do? Continue the present arrangement, but obtain a supply of evangelists from America;" and in another part of the Report, referring to this matter, we have the following: "The suggestion of sending for evangelists from America is good, if practicable, but at the rate of late contributions it will take nearly a year to bring over one evangelist, and at present it seems to us that a competent supply from that quarter is not practicable. Several brethren have volunteered to subscribe certain sums towards defraying the expenses of Brother A. Campbell, if he could be at liberty to come, and we do hope that ere long some arrangements will be made to accomplish that desirable object."

Nor is this all. On the following October 26th, or nearly six months after the second publication of Mr. Campbell's views upon the Communion question in the *Messenger*, which were therefore fully known in the churches, the following address was read to the church at Nottingham, and was printed in the *Christian Messenger* :—

“BELOVED BRETHREN,—We well know that the hope of a visit from our highly esteemed Brother Campbell has for some time given great pleasure to all of you who wish to see the religion of Jesus restored in its primitive loveliness in this our native Britain ; and because of the earnest desire for such a visit, which has now long been felt, we address to you a proposal which we feel to be necessary in order to place us in a position to invite our esteemed brother with confidence, and that the responsibility of so doing may not fall on any one person.

“We have lately had intercourse, both personal and by letter, with many brethren, from various parts, on this question, and we find all of the same mind with ourselves, that the time is now come when something of a definite and decisive character should be done to bring this visit about ; and having been strongly urged by many to take this matter in hand and place it in definite form before the brethren, we have concluded to do so, and now present you, beloved brethren, with a very simple proposal, which if acted upon at once, and with the energy the occasion demands, will, we firmly hope, lead to the realisation of our wishes.

“It is known to most of you that Brother Campbell has never yet received an invitation to visit us, except from private brethren, who, being in correspondence with him, have expressed their strong desire to see him and have his valuable assistance in this country for a time. These brethren, we know, in expressing their

own desire, have also expressed that of the whole of us, but nothing has yet been done by us to relieve them of the responsibility which their kindness, in giving the invitation, has laid them under; and as we know the whole of the brethren wish both to see our brother, and also to bear their share of the necessary expenses, after much thought and consultation we have determined to set in operation the following plan:—

“First, we must raise a sufficient fund. The journey here and back again to America, as well as the expenses that will necessarily be incurred in giving effect to our brother’s labours while in this country, must of course be borne by us; and as we do not wish to impose the responsibility of this on any one or two brethren, we must raise a fund by our united contributions for this purpose. The expenses are estimated at from £250 to £300.

“Next, we need a treasurer with whom to deposit the contributions of the brethren. And lastly, some one to hold correspondence with Brother Campbell.

“On the first necessity, the fund. We can only prove whether it can be raised by a trial. If the brethren do as many of them have promised, this will be no difficulty. But scattered promises will not do what is wanted, we must begin to act.

“A treasurer is ready to hand, in the person of our long tried and much esteemed Brother Hine, who is treasurer of the church at Nottingham, and has been for some time treasurer for the Evangelists’ Fund. Our brother is so well known by all who have ever visited Nottingham, that a doubt cannot be admitted of his competency and fidelity. We have also, in the person of our brother James Wallis, one who can enter into the necessary correspondence with Brother Campbell, one who has often written to him, and is perhaps better known to Brother Campbell than any of us. So that there need be no longer delay.

“We at Nottingham intend at once to place in the hands of

Brother Hine a sum for this purpose ; and we now respectfully invite all who wish to unite with us in this matter, to forward their contributions to Brother James Wallis, who will hand them over to Brother Hine and acknowledge the same in the *Christian Messenger*. And as soon as the necessary amount is raised, Brother Wallis will write to Brother Campbell and report the result in the *Messenger*.

“ And now, brethren, the matter is fairly begun, and we do hope all of you, who can, will unite with us in it without any unnecessary delay. The winter is fast hastening upon us, and we should wish to have all ready, so far as we in this country are concerned, for Brother Campbell to come next spring. And if the Lord in His providence shall further this our desire, we pray that it may be effective to the glory of His name and the establishment of primitive Christianity in this land.

JAMES WALLIS,	} <i>Pastors.</i>
THOMAS WALLIS,	
JONATHAN HINE,	} <i>Deacons.</i>
WILLIAM POWERS,	
HENRY MEEKLEY,	
WILLIAM MARRIOTT,	
JOHN FROST,	} <i>Evangelists.”</i>
GEORGE GREENWELL,	

It has already been stated that the invitation to Mr. Campbell was sent, January 22nd, 1846. As reference is made in the letter to the discussion which Mr. Campbell's views on the Communion question elicited in this country, it is deemed proper to print the whole communication, in order that it may be clearly seen what the difficulties had been, as well as the conclusion which was finally reached. The letter is as follows :—

## INVITATION TO A. CAMPBELL.

“NOTTINGHAM, *January 22nd*, 1846.

“BELOVED BROTHER CAMPBELL,—May favour, mercy, and peace from God-our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, rest upon you, and upon all who love and keep His commandments in sincerity and truth.

“I am now requested to address a few lines to you on a subject of great importance connected with the Reformation in this country. You must be aware that for several years past there have been many individuals in England, Ireland, and Scotland, who have had a strong desire to see you amongst them for a while. On several occasions, when the hope of this desirable object has been all but realised, so far as we are concerned, some unexpected event has transpired which caused the whole affair to be given up until now.

“Just previous to your debate with Mr. N. L. Rice reaching this country, the Disciples of Jesus in several districts, were in a united state to receive you; at the same time they were making suitable contributions to pay all necessary expenses that might be incurred in such an undertaking: but when the debate had been examined by several of the leading brethren, and when it was discovered, according to your own expressions in the said debate, That you had viewed with great satisfaction the fact, that some Presbyterians, on their own responsibility, and that too without being the subjects of Christ's one baptism, had sat down at the Lord's Table with the disciples of Jesus, the affair was again given up, and the contributions also almost brought to an end.

“The subject of Open Communion, as apparently thus advocated by you, produced a complete change in the minds of many of our leading brethren, and it was concluded that unless a good degree of the spirit of union and co-operation, both in the congregation and with the evangelists, was in existence, it were better for you



not to come at that time, even had you been able to do so. It is, I believe, a well-known fact, that without there be in existence unity and love among the advocates of primitive Christianity, no great things can be effected that are either valuable to man or acceptable to God.

“I need scarcely inform you that we have had many difficulties to encounter, and these have existed more or less in almost every congregation. Indeed, whatever has been a source of trouble and division among the congregations with you, has in some degree been the case with us in England; at the same time, we have not had that moral power, to any great extent, among us—I mean that power which always flows through the medium of intelligent, courageous, and upright minds, and which is necessary to resist the baneful influence of those who are *factionists*, and enemies to sobriety, truth, and righteousness, as revealed in the Bible. Still, the cause we plead is the Lord’s, and there are many who have abandoned all human speculations, being determined to hold fast that which is clearly made known in the Bible, and to contend earnestly for the faith formerly delivered to the saints—for after all, it is by this alone that we can be saved from the evils of this present world, or be qualified for the enjoyment and fruition of that eternal state which is yet to be revealed. But I perceive I am wandering from the object of my present communication.

“In the month of October last the subject of your being again invited to visit England was brought up and discussed over by a few brethren in this vicinity, after which it was agreed that an address should be drawn up by our much beloved Brother Frost (now no more with us), which was first read to the elders, afterwards to the congregation in Nottingham, who unanimously requested that it be published in the *Messenger* for November, and which I hope you will have seen long before this reaches Bethany.

“ This call<sup>e</sup> upon the brethren to co-operate together has been responded to by upwards of twenty-seven different congregations, and the sum of one hundred and seventy pounds already contributed, with many promises of still greater liberality. By this you will perceive the invitation is based upon a more public and united effort than at any former period, and my prayer is that the Lord will open the way for you, so that our desire may be consummated some time early in the coming spring. Of course it is not for us to dictate, nor can we tell by what means you can arrange so as to leave your numerous obligations at Bethany. We may, however, indulge the hope, that you are surrounded with those able and talented brethren who will at once say, *Go, brother*, and visit the islands of the sea, and we will for a time do our best to carry on the work at home.

“ If it were needful, I might urge the following motives :—

“ First. The congregations here are weak and feeble ; many of our able brethren have been removed from amongst us, some by emigration, some by going back to business, and others have fallen asleep in Jesus. What, then, is to be done ? We have no hope of seeing men raised up, except through the instrumentality of labourers visiting us from the United States.

“ Second. Another motive we would urge is, that in the judgment of many, the time has arrived when there ought to be a closer union, and a more general system of co-operation existing among all the Disciples of Jesus throughout the world.

“ Third. As a greater degree of light, and a more extensive knowledge of the truth, is breaking in upon the world, there is a general anxiety for some bond of union and co-operation to be proposed, upon which all Christians can unite.

“ Last, though not least. Sinners are perishing on every hand ! Come then, brother, try and make this one effort, and the Lord shall have all the glory.

“ In conclusion we may remark, that if the brethren in

Kentucky and Virginia would unite and be determined to send some brother with you, of ardent zeal, combined with great fidelity and love, it would, no doubt, be gratifying to the brethren, useful to the community at large, and most acceptable to God. The whole matter must now be left with you. The brethren, on whose behalf I write, will anxiously await your reply, and may the Lord direct you in this, as well as in all other things pertaining to His kingdom and glory.

“Yours affectionately, in the hope of eternal life,

“J. WALLIS.

“P.S.—It was intended this letter should be sent off by the steamer of January 4th, but personal and domestic affliction prevented it.”

To sum up the whole case, it should be stated that, notwithstanding it had been proposed to invite Alexander Campbell to visit this country, when the Campbell and Rice Debate reached here, there was some hesitancy about doing so, on account of the expressed views of Mr. Campbell on the Communion question. But this hesitancy was of short duration, and was soon overcome by an overwhelming sentiment in favour of inviting him; and not only was a cordial invitation sent to this effect, but an assurance was given in this invitation that £170 had already been contributed towards meeting his expenses, and a clear intimation was given that still further sums would be forthcoming.

Now it must be evident to the merest tyro that such views as Mr. Campbell expressed did not at that time debar him from working with the brethren here, or enjoy-

ing their fellowship. He was not only invited to visit them, but the money was actually contributed to pay his expenses. At the Chester meeting, held the next year, Mr. Campbell presided. No questions were asked him about his views on the Communion question, and £100 were given at the meeting to Bethany College, the Institution founded by Mr. Campbell in America for the special training of young men for the ministry. So it will be seen that whatever may be the views of the "Churches of Christ" in this country at the present time, as regards co-operating with those who practise as Mr. Campbell did, in reference to the Communion question, it is simply certain that these churches did not at one time refuse to co-operate with those holding Mr. Campbell's views, and if they will not now co-operate it is equally certain that *they have changed their front since the time of Mr. Campbell's visit here.*

Considerable care has been taken in presenting these facts, in order to explain some of the matters which will follow in Mr. Coop's history. No doubt he himself largely sympathised with the strictest of his brethren at the time of Mr. Campbell's visit ; but he never thought, even at that time, of making his views upon the Communion question a test of fellowship with his American brethren, or with any others who were baptized believers in good standing. Doubtless, he would have at that time insisted that those who partook at the Lord's Table should be baptized believers, but he would not have made this view of

the matter a question of fellowship or co-operation between himself and any other baptized believer whom he regarded as a true Christian. He always held, even in the days when he was regarded as bigoted by his neighbours, to the notion that *character* and not *opinions* should be the test of fellowship after persons had come into the kingdom. He could not avoid the conclusion that the Lord had laid down the conditions of admission into the fellowship, but he did not make opinions of points of doctrine a barrier in any way to the fellowship where those who sought the fellowship were themselves obedient. Hence, he never did sympathise with his brethren in the new test which some years afterwards they instituted, which not only refused fellowship to those who were not baptized, but practically refused co-operation with those who were baptized, if these latter did not accept the Strict Communion views which were held by the churches.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE MOVEMENT IN AMERICA AND IN THIS COUNTRY COMPARED.

IN accordance with the invitation so heartily extended to Mr. Campbell, he, in company with Mr. James Henshall, reached England at the close of the spring of 1847, more than two years after his alleged Open Communion views were printed in the *Christian Messenger*. On reaching London, Mr. Campbell was the honoured guest of the United States minister at the Court of St. James, the Hon. George Bancroft, the distinguished historian ; and through him, as well as through letters from the first men of his own country, Mr. Campbell was the recipient of honours and attentions from the great leaders and moulders of thought in England. He made a considerable tour through the United Kingdom, preaching and lecturing to large congregations at many important points, during which he was entertained at Wigan by Mr. Coop. He finally reached Chester, October 1st, where he attended the second representative meeting of the "Churches of Christ" in this country. At this meeting, as has been already stated, Mr. Campbell presided, and

the number of churches on the list in the United Kingdom was reported to be eighty, and the number of members 2,300.

Mr. Coop attended this meeting. It was the first time he had ever met with the delegates from the churches in council. However, he had now become somewhat acquainted with many of the brethren scattered throughout the country. He had also begun to take a deep interest in the general work. He was a careful reader of the *Christian Messenger*, and had also become familiar with some of Mr. Campbell's writings, such as the Campbell and Rice debate, etc. Nevertheless, for the most part his religious work up to this time had been confined to Wigan and some of the surrounding towns. The church at Wigan in 1847 numbered thirty members, and Mr. Coop was at that time acting as a sort of corresponding secretary for it. This fact is evident from the following note in the *Christian Messenger*:—

“WIGAN, November 10th, 1847.

“We hereby inform you that our number of members composing the church here is thirty. We are living in peace and unity, and refer all correspondence to our brother, Timothy Coop, Clothier.

“(Signed) J. MERCER.”

But, as already intimated, Mr. Coop had begun to look far beyond Wigan, in his deep interest for the religious principles which he had adopted, and it is singular that almost as soon as he learned anything at all about the

churches, which occupied practically his own position, he became intensely anxious about evangelistic work. His keen practical eye soon discovered one of the weak points in the movement. He saw at once that a work such as was proposed could not possibly be made successful unless it was intensely aggressive ; and as he recognised the New Testament provision for evangelists as the chief element in aggressive work, his heart became sad as soon as he was aware of the fact that very little attention had been given among the churches to the matter of supporting evangelists. Hence we find that in a letter which he addressed to the Editor of the *Christian Messenger*, dated at Wigan as early as January 27th, 1847, he asks these questions: "Is there any evangelist fund? and, What are we doing as a body of Christians in making known the glorious gospel of the Son of God?"

These questions may be taken as a key to the subsequent religious life of Mr. Coop. What had been proposed at the Edinburgh meeting in 1842, and what was again reiterated in an address to the churches by the evangelists' committee in 1845, and again reiterated at the Chester meeting in 1847, in reference to the importance of securing American evangelists, at once enlisted the hearty sympathy of Mr. Coop, and he never gave the matter up after he became interested in it. He felt sure that the plea for which he was contending could not be made effective in this country without the help of at least a few educated men of commanding pulpit talent, who could fairly represent the



principles before the people. As the churches in this country at that time could not find among them a single man who met all the requirements of the case, Mr. Coop heartily acquiesced in the judgment so frequently and so emphatically expressed by his brethren—that these men ought to be secured from America as soon as it was practicable.

He has left recorded the following reasons why he was anxious to have American evangelists to labour in this country :—

“ 1. Because the movement first began in America, and was, therefore, better understood by the Americans.

“ 2. The men who were at the head of the movement in that country were educated men, and had, consequently, commanded the respect of other religious bodies, as well as kept the movement from some extremes to which it was running in this country.

“ 3. The movement had started in a country that was new, and was not, therefore, tied down to old customs and habits. In other words, it was freer to simply follow the teaching of the New Testament.

“ 4. All the best writers belonging to the movement were Americans, and the republication of what they wrote in this country had furnished nearly all the arguments in support of the movement here.”

Mr. Coop heartily believed that the mere republication of the writings of the American brethren would not effectually give the movement in this country its American type. And yet he just as heartily believed that this type was

necessary here in order to make the movement a success. Hence he was anxious to have a number of men come from the other side of the Atlantic who would, by their personal influence, their wise direction, as well as their Scriptural teaching, give the movement in this country not only the *form* but also the *spirit* of what it was in America.

It has already been noted that the type of the movement in America was somewhat different even in its incipency from what it was in this country, though this difference did not manifest itself so decidedly at the beginning. The American churches never troubled themselves much about the communion question. Their plea was chiefly in the interests of Christian *unity*. This was the keynote of almost every sermon, as well as nearly all the discussions in the public press. It was believed by the Disciples of America that the divided state of Christendom was not only a sin, but an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the conversion of the world. Consequently, they laboured with the very greatest earnestness to bring about the unity of all who sincerely loved the Lord. In making this plea they were confronted with some serious difficulties. In the first place, they felt that they must be faithful to the Word of God, and yet that Word undoubtedly taught, according to their notions, that only believers' immersion was scriptural baptism. However, they had a difficulty to meet on the other side. They were anxious to recognise the piety and general Christian

character of those who had honestly mistaken the meaning of the ordinance of baptism. The result of this condition of things led the Disciples to adopt a somewhat conservative position as regards the Communion question. They would not admit any to actual membership in their churches without baptism upon a profession of faith in Christ; for they believed that this was absolutely required by the Holy Spirit. But in order to meet the second difficulty, they did not object to persons of good religious character who, upon their own option, chose to partake with them of the Lord's Supper. Hence, it will be seen that practically the Disciples did not *invite* to the communion-table, nor did they *exclude* from it. They felt that when they had spoken faithfully the Word of God, as regards the conditions of the gospel, they had then discharged their whole obligation; and, consequently, they left the question as to whether unbaptized persons should commune or not to be decided by such persons themselves.

Whether this position was logical or not was not the question with those who advocated it. They felt that the whole of religious society was itself illogical, and, therefore, in dealing with this society it was not best to be too exacting as regards matters of pure inference. Indeed, one of their cardinal principles was not to make anything a test of Christian fellowship for which they could not find a "Thus saith the Lord," and as they could not find any positive precept or example governing the matter

under consideration, they believed that in the present divided state of Christendom the only thing that could be legitimately done, as regards the matter of fellowship, was to protect the church itself from an unbaptized membership, but as to the matter of communion, it was believed that this should not be made a question, except so far as faithfully teaching the Word of God was concerned.

Doubtless, as has already been intimated, the *spirit* of the movement in America had much to do in shaping this Communion question. It was believed by almost all the Disciples of that country that it was quite useless to talk about union of Christians if there were really no Christians except those among the Disciples themselves. The Disciples were already united, and it was, therefore, useless to plead for Christian unity among them. Hence, it was well understood that their plea for Christian unity meant something else. Nor did it mean that the members of other churches must all join the Disciples in order to secure that unity. It meant that there were, among the various churches, even in the face of grave irregularities and want of conformity to New Testament teaching, very many who were already owned of the Lord, and who simply needed to be "taught the way of the Lord more perfectly." It was believed that, in dealing with these, much more could be accomplished by treating them kindly, and as already members of the Father's household, notwithstanding they were lacking in some

important matters, than if they were driven away by a severely logical course of dealing, such as was adopted by those who held to Strict Communion.

In this country, however, the case was somewhat different. From the very beginning there was not much effort made at securing Christian unity in any practical way. The effort here was to *storm* the fort rather than capture it by parallel approaches. Indeed, there was little disposition to have patience with anything for which there could not be found a distinct precept or example in the New Testament. Nor did this logical exactness stop even here. It was affirmed that only baptized believers were strictly Christians, and that, consequently, only such should partake of the Lord's Supper, since that Supper was intended only for Christians. Now this severe logic was after all based upon two *assumptions*, without the shadow of a shade of proof, viz., that only baptized believers are Christians, and that only Christians can rightfully partake of the Lord's Supper. The American brethren would answer these assumptions by saying that the whole argument is a *petitio principii*—a begging of the question—taking for granted the very thing to be proved ; and at any rate it is simply basing the whole practice of Strict Communion upon a pure *inference*, and not upon a direct precept or example clearly found in the Word of God.

After the Chester meeting, Mr. Coop had considerable hope that some American evangelists would be secured to labour in this country. Mr. Campbell was charged

with the mission of selecting these, and sending them as soon as he possibly could after his return to America. During the next year we find he had the matter carefully under consideration, and reports are furnished in the first volume of the *British Millennial Harbinger*, which publication was started in that year, while the *Christian Messenger* was discontinued. The *Harbinger* was edited by Mr. Wallis, who had so ably conducted the *Christian Messenger*.

During this year Mr. Coop sent a number of interesting reports to the *Harbinger* of the work at Wigan, and as these reports furnish considerable information, as well as being interesting in themselves, indicating as they do Mr. Coop's intense earnestness and deep interest in the work, it is deemed proper to give these reports just as they are found printed for that year.

“WIGAN, *January 5th*, 1848.

“We are happy to inform you, that we have added two to our number during the last month ; one upon a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, who having obeyed from the heart that form of sound doctrine delivered to the Apostles, she is now filled with peace and joy in believing, having died to sin, been buried with Jesus in baptism, and now risen to walk in newness of life. What a glorious and heart-cheering thought, that all the Christian's duties are real privileges, and the more obedient to Christ, the more peace and satisfaction of mind ensue. What a blessed system is the Christian system ! The other, having made a public confession of sin, was restored to the fellowship of the saints. We are going on in peace and harmony, and, I believe, increasing

in Christian virtues, and aspiring after holiness. We should be most happy to see you in Wigan; we remember that you greatly encouraged us when here, and we were stimulated to more zeal and devotion. My prayer is, that we may be excited to more diligence and usefulness—time is short.

“T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *January 29th, 1848.*”

“Last Lord’s Day afternoon, at our Bible-class meeting, we had the pleasure to hear the confession of a young girl, about sixteen years of age, who had been a Sunday scholar. We were gratified to hear her simple faith and confidence in Jesus Christ, as having died for her sins, and risen again for her justification. Some one of the brethren asked her why she wished to be baptized. ‘Because I have read in the Bible that Jesus said, He hath believeth and is baptised shall be saved: I believe in Jesus Christ, I know that I am a sinner, and I wish to be saved.’ She said she repented of her sins, and wished to obey Jesus in baptism. We accordingly baptized her, and she is now rejoicing in Jesus her Saviour. About the same hour of the same day, another girl, that had been one of our scholars, had asked leave of her father to go to the evening meeting; she was the eldest of five, and whilst in the act of preparing and washing her sister, her clothes caught fire; there being no one in the house, she ran out, but was dreadfully burnt. I went to see her on Monday morning, when she requested me to read a chapter out of the Testament, and pray for her, which I accordingly did; she appeared to be quite composed, and resigned to the will of the Lord. She entreated her father and mother to obey the commandments of Jesus, and desired me to pray for them and for her little brother and sisters. She was one of the most affectionate and dutiful girls I ever knew. She died on the Tuesday following. My prayer is, that this mysterious providence may

be made a blessing to her parents, and a warning to us to be always ready, for in such an hour as we think not the Son of Man cometh. *February 6th.*—This evening we had the unspeakable pleasure of hearing a broken-down sinner confess his faith in Jesus, and ask for baptism; and we took him the same hour of the night and baptized him. After this the mother of the girl that was burned, expressed her wish to obey Jesus, but she desired us to instruct her more perfectly in the way of the Lord. *February 13th.*—This morning, after the meeting, two made their confession, and desired to be baptized: one of them has been a local preacher among the Methodists, and the other is an aged woman. We immersed them in the river Douglas, before a large number of witnesses. Brother Parkinson, who is a valiant soldier for Jesus Christ, addressed the multitude on the leading facts of the gospel, and the blessings promised to those who obey the truth. In the evening of the same day three others expressed their desire to obey Jesus, and be saved by Him. We baptized them in the river the same hour, and now they are rejoicing in God their Saviour. May they be preserved faithful unto death, that they may receive a crown of life, which fadeth not away. The day following another was added to Christ by baptism.

“Yours in Jesus,  
“T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *March 17th.*

“Since I wrote last we have three added to our number by baptism, making five this month, all of them from the world, none having been before connected with any religious body.

“T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *April 21st.*

“To-day being Good Friday, and our brethren at liberty, we had a tea-party, upwards of one hundred being present. We



had Brother Haigh, from Huddersfield, besides\* several other brethren; and after tea a very interesting meeting, the best of all being that God was with us during the day, four persons making the good confession and being baptized. Three of them were from Leigh, the other being the wife of one of our brethren. *May 9th.*—This afternoon another brother's wife was immersed into Jesus Christ, for the remission of all her past sins, and she did, indeed, rejoice in God her Saviour. *May 16th.*—We have taken another room for our meetings on the Lord's Day; the same room that you and Brother Frost spoke in when at Wigan. Should any of our brethren from a distance be passing through this town, we should be very glad to see them at our meetings, and give us a word of encouragement or exhortation, or to preach Christ crucified unto the world.

“Yours in the one hope,  
“T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *May 30th.*

“It is with great pleasure that I write you a few lines to give you some idea how the truth is spreading, and that men and women are induced to bow unto the name of Jesus, confessing Him Lord of all. Our Brother Parkinson went about three miles into the country to-day, and preached Christ unto them, the result being that one man made his confession and was baptized. *June 4th.*—We have been highly delighted with a visit from Brother Greenwell, the evangelist, from Huddersfield, who gave us eight discourses during his stay in Wigan; the congregations were not very large, but they were attentive, and I doubt not the seed that was then sown will germinate, spring up, and produce good fruit to the honour and praise of our Saviour.

“Yours in hope,  
“T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *June 26th.*

“We are happy to inform you that first one and then another are bowing their hearts, and with their tongues confessing that Jesus is the Christ, to the glory of God the Father. A male and female, after the meeting yesterday, made the good confession, and desired to be baptized into Christ, in order that they might walk in newness of life, and learn to keep all God’s commands. *July 9th.*—This evening has been one of the happiest we have spent for some time, two more females desiring to give themselves up to the Lord, body, soul, and spirit, and to obey that form of doctrine which had been delivered to us (Romans vi.). We met in the country, where there is much water, etc., and as it was a pleasant evening, a goodly number of the brethren went through the fields with us, singing praises to God and the Lamb : creation echoed with the praises of the redeemed. *July 16th.*—Another confessed the Lord, and put Him on by being baptized into His name. As a church we are living in peace, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost ; but we are not free from troubles and anxieties. We are often ready to say, Who is sufficient for these things ? May it be our wisdom to look unto the strong for strength, and to the wise for wisdom. Up to the present time we have had great satisfaction with the members that have been brought out of the world. The five that are mentioned in this note were not connected with any religious sect.

“From yours in hope,  
“T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *July 23rd.*

“It was with great pleasure we read the announcement of the Co-operative Meeting to be held in Glasgow in September. Our brethren have agreed to send one, if not two delegates. . . . After our morning meeting, a young man made the good confession, and was baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins, through faith in the blood of Christ.

“T. COOP.”

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“WIGAN, *September 6th.*

“ . . . I have just time to say that another brother has cast in his lot with us. On the 28th ult. he gave himself to the Lord in His own legal way, by being buried with Him in baptism, and on the next Lord’s Day he united with His people, in order that he may learn obedience to all things commanded by Jesus.

“ Yours truly,  
“ T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *October 21st.*

“ DEAR BROTHER,—We have had three immersions during the last month, and I have no doubt if you could pay us another visit, your labours would be greatly crowned and blessed amongst us. All the brethren are very desirous that you should come again soon. Can you say when ?

“ T. COOP.”

“WIGAN, *November 19th.*

. . . “Brother Henry Perkins and myself had a most solemn and refreshing meeting at New Southport, most of the hearers being in tears. After attending to the Apostles’ doctrine, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers, five men made the good confession, and desired to be baptized. Brother Perkins baptised them into Christ for the remission of all their past sins, and they went on their way rejoicing. Two of them had been connected with the Wesleyan Methodists, and the other three had not previously made any profession of religion.

“ Yours in love,  
“ T. COOP.”

It will be noticed that one of these reports refers to the yearly meeting which was to be held that autumn in Glasgow. Mr. Coop attended that meeting as one of

the delegates from the church in Wigan, George Sinclair being the other delegate. It was while going to this meeting, on shipboard, September 3rd, 1848, that Mr. Coop first met Mr. David King, now of Birmingham, and who, after the health of Mr. Wallis broke down, edited the *British Harbinger*. Mr. King was subsequently, in December of that same year, appointed by the London District Association an evangelist for that district.

The meeting at Glasgow did not make a very favourable impression upon Mr. Coop. The number of churches on the list was eighty-seven, and the number reporting at the meeting seventy-seven, while the membership was reckoned 2,057, a loss on the previous report. He had gone to the meeting with great hope that something would be done to secure the active services of American evangelists, but he soon found that the conference was in utter confusion as to what was the best to be done, and consequently, though he took £20 of cash with him for the Evangelist Fund, he brought the money back, and afterwards used it in securing a plot of land, on which to build a small chapel, in School Street, School Common, Wigan. This plot, with six cottages adjoining, was purchased, and a chapel built during the next year, the doors and window frames of which came from the old Wesleyan Chapel where he worshipped when he first came to Wigan.

The work at this chapel absorbed most of Mr. Coop's

personal attention during the year 1849. 'There is no record that he took very much interest in any general work during the year. Indeed, it is evident that his ardour had been considerably cooled by the Glasgow meeting, so far as the general work was concerned. This, however, only made him increase his efforts in his special work at Wigan. And as soon as the new premises were completed his local work began to grow in importance day by day.

These new premises were opened the second Lord's Day in February 1849, and Mr. James Wallis, editor of the *British Millennial Harbinger*, was invited to participate in the opening services. This will be apparent from a reference in one of the following letters, which are printed to show something of what Mr. Coop was accomplishing at Wigan during the year 1849.

"WIGAN, Dec. 11th, 1848.

"DEAR BROTHER,—It is with feelings of pleasure and gratitude to our Heavenly Father, that I write a few lines respecting the cause of our Redeemer. On November 21st, we were favoured with a visit from our Brother H. Shaw. He addressed us on the duties of parents to their children, and children to their parents, from Ephes. vi. The brethren were edified and comforted, and at the conclusion a man rose up and made his confession of faith in Jesus, and was baptised. On Thursday, the 22nd, after our usual meeting, a young man also made his confession, and was the same day buried with Jesus in baptism, and rose again to newness of life. 26th.—We had great pleasure in baptizing Brother Holding's wife, and our prayer is, that like

Zacharias and Elizabeth, they may walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless. *Dec. 3rd.*—Brother Robinson and I went to Whittle, where, one of the brethren having lost a child, it was interred on the day of our visit, when we addressed the people present. After the funeral, the mother of the child made her confession, and desired baptism. *Dec. 11th.*—The brethren have again been highly gratified this evening by hearing the confession of two more middle-aged men: at the time of their confession we were pleased to see them manifest such an earnest determination to give themselves entirely to the Lord, and to keep all His ordinances. According to their desire, they were planted together in the likeness of His death. The gospel is still the power of God to the salvation of every one that believeth.

“Yours, etc.,  
“T. COOP.”

The following communication was addressed to Mr. Coop:—

“WHITTLE, *Nov. 27th.*

“DEAR BROTHER,—I have this morning to communicate glad tidings to you, which will cause great joy to all the true followers of the Lamb. Three more precious souls were added to the church of Christ by baptism last night, about eight o'clock, all of whom are aged men, having wives and families, which renders the prospect still more cheering. What shall we render to the Lord for His wondrous works to the children of men? You will have the goodness to let Brother Clayton know that the Lord has crowned his labours in a wonderful manner, although, whilst he was with us, things were not so promising; yet the seed that was sown, we hope in the Lord fell on good ground. Let the church know what the Lord is doing in this place, and unto Him ascribe all the praise. I have been amongst our people this

morning, and believe there will be four or five come forward at once ; and, brother, as they wish your presence, if you can come, I believe the Lord will bless your visit among us.

“ Yours in love,

“ WILLIAM WHITE.”

“ WIGAN, *Jan. 17th, 1849.*

“ Since I wrote to you we have had four baptisms into Christ, one on the 17th, 25th, 26th, and 31st December. I pray God that we may all be sanctified, body, soul, and spirit ; that we may be of one mind, all speaking the same thing ; that we may be perfectly joined together in love and unity. We purpose to open our new meeting-room the second Lord’s Day in February, and shall be most happy to see you with us on that occasion. It is the wish of all the brethren that you should be here.

“ From yours in the good hope,

“ T. COOP.”

“ It is my intention, if the Lord will, to comply with the invitation of the brethren at Wigan, and visit them on the second Lord’s Day in February.

“ J. W.”

“ WIGAN, *May 18th.*

“ One has recently been added to our number by baptism, all other matters being about the same.

“ T. COOP.”

“ WIGAN, *Oct. 10th.*

“ During the last month we have added four members to the church, two by immersion into Christ, the two others having been wandering sheep, who, we are glad to say, have been brought back to the fold. One of the last two was seized with cholera on Lord’s Day morning, and died in the evening ; her younger child died shortly after, and both were buried in the same coffin. I am sorry to say that the cholera is on the increase, upwards of twenty

dying during last night. There appears to be a general gloom over the countenances of all serious persons. It is sufficient to make one's heart bleed when we look around and see the sin and wickedness with which our town swarms, in the midst of sickness and death. Our constant prayer is that, while the judgments of God are abroad, the people may learn righteousness.

“T. Coop.”

The Annual Meeting of the churches was held this year at Sunderland, to which he was a delegate. The whole number of churches on the list was stated to be ninety-four, while fifty-one of these reported at the meeting. The membership was one thousand and twenty-nine, showing a decrease in the membership compared with the preceding years.

No wonder Mr. Coop was discouraged at these figures. Within two years there had been a loss in membership of about one thousand three hundred, and as there was no provision made for active evangelisation it was evident, to a mind like Mr. Coop's, that the general work would soon come to nought, and, consequently, he made up his mind to give his attention mainly to what seemed to be his special duty. The church at Wigan at this time numbered over sixty active members, and its influence had begun to be felt much more decidedly than these numbers would indicate. It must be remembered that every one of these members was practically a preacher going from house to house, and, wherever admittance could be obtained, proclaiming the gospel, and pleading with every person



whose attention could be secured to surrender to the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is true that most of these persons were in very humble spheres, but it is equally true that their religious characters strongly emphasised the plea which they made. Nearly all of them were men and women who were known to bedevoted, self-sacrificing Christians, and whose general standing before the community was above reproach. Mr. Coop was especially prominent as a worthy representative of all that he preached. Very many repudiated his teaching, but very few could find fault with his practice. Besides, his growing business gave him a social position which would have been very influential had he chosen to use it for social purposes ; but, as a matter of fact, he sought little or no society except that of his brethren in Christ. He found in the Church the sweetest fellowship ; and among the despised followers of Jesus, who were regarded by many of the clergy, and even by some of the nonconformist ministers, as heretics of a very dangerous kind, he was content to spend most of his time after business hours in counsel, the study of the Word of God, and in preaching the Gospel. However, he had not entirely lost hope that something would yet be accomplished in the general field, and to this end he continued to do what he could in stimulating his brethren to organise and contribute liberally in the work of spreading the truth.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

**B**ETWEEN the years 1848 and 1851 the state of society in Europe was greatly unsettled. The year 1848, as is well known, was marked by revolutions, involving Austria, Italy, Sicily, France, England, and Ireland, and, indeed, more or less affecting the whole of European society. A French Republic was proclaimed on February 26th, and officially recognised by England on March 1st. In Ireland, the Smith-O'Brien uprising, though threatening for a time, was speedily put down. Chartists in London were stirred once more into activity by the revolutionary movements in France, and a monster meeting was held on Kennington Common, numbering about 20,000. This meeting greatly alarmed London, and at least 150,000 citizens enrolled themselves at this time as special constables to guard the peace. Consols fell to 79, and, generally, depression was felt throughout the country. On December 20th, Louis Napoleon was proclaimed President of the French Republic, and during the next year there were signs of returning quiet, though business

was still depressed by the uncertainty which everywhere prevailed.

In 1850, the year which has now been reached in the course of Mr. Coop's career, we find very little of political interest except the death of Sir Robert Peel, which took place on July 2nd. It is well known that he successfully filled with ability the posts of Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, of Chief Secretary for Ireland ; twice he was Home Secretary, and twice he held the Premiership. His name is intimately associated with a large number of beneficial measures, amongst which may be mentioned the Currency Bill, Criminal Code Reform, Catholic Emancipation, Abolition of Corn Laws, Reform of Customs Tariff, and our present system of police.

These matters are referred to now as they indicate some of the steps in the progress of reform during the early manhood of Mr. Coop. It will be seen that he was brought up in the midst of the most stirring events of modern English history, and it is not surprising that he early imbibed the spirit of reform, and heartily entered into all the great questions which were agitating the public mind. His sterling Liberalism manifested itself from the very beginning of his political thinking, and he was always found on the side of every reformatory measure which promised blessings to the masses. He was emphatically a people's man, though not because of his own humble origin, but because of his intense sympathy with the poor and needy. However, he never carried his

Liberalism to extremes. While he was anxious to secure all needed reformation in our political system, he sought to effect this through safe and wise means. He had a profound respect for law, and while the law was in force he believed in obeying it ; but if it was an unwise or oppressive law he laboured hard to secure its repeal.

Notwithstanding the somewhat depressed condition of things in the year 1850, his own business was more prosperous than it ever had been before. He had already by incessant toil and careful management accumulated a small capital, which he invested from time to time as he saw opportunity. In the matter of investments he had the hearty co-operation of his friend Mr. William Haigh, of Huddersfield, to whom he was most indebted for leading him to a clearer understanding of some of his religious duties. But his business success only increased his energy in religious matters. He spent all his spare time in studying his Bible, in preaching the Gospel, and in counselling with those with whom he was associated.

About this time his well-known anti-legalism had a curious illustration. Mr. Coop early came to the conclusion that Christianity is not Judaism, nor, indeed, any part of Judaism ; neither an extension nor a modification, but a new religion founded on a new covenant and on better promises. Indeed, among the first clear conceptions which he had of the New Testament was the difference between Christianity and Judaism. He came to the conclusion that the Sinaitic covenant passed away with

the Jewish dispensation, and that only so much of the Jewish law as was re-enacted by Christ and His Apostles is now binding upon Christians.

Of course this view did away with the Jewish Sabbath. Mr. Coop believed in a day specially set apart for religious purposes, but he did not believe in such a Sabbath as was enjoined upon the Jews. When he spoke about the matter according to his convictions, he frequently shocked his friends, who had never been able to clearly distinguish between the old covenant and the new. At the time of which we are now speaking he had a number of young men in his employ, who were living with him. Most of them were Wesleyans, and it was not unfrequently the case that considerable discussion took place between him and them on religious questions. The question of Sabbath observance was often discussed. Mr. Coop sought to instruct these young men in the "way of the Lord more perfectly." Their views appeared to him to practically amount to Judaism, and he was anxious to lead them into what he considered to be the liberty of the gospel. As regards this matter he himself says :—

"One Sunday morning I came downstairs, but had forgotten to shave. There was at the time a Wesleyan local preacher in the house, who heard me say I had forgotten to shave and must go back and attend to it. He at once charged me with Sabbath-breaking. He said he never shaved on Sunday, and thought it was very sinful for any one to do so. He then went straight from my house to the railway-station, and bought a ticket

for Bolton, to which place he went that day to hear a distinguished Wesleyan preacher. I saw him the day after, and asked him how he had enjoyed himself. He said they had a grand sermon, and he had enjoyed himself very much. 'But,' said I, 'what about the lecture you gave me on Sabbath-breaking? and what sort of a conscience have you?' 'Well,' said he, 'my conscience did trouble me at times when I thought of buying my ticket.' I told him I imagined it was difficult for him to see the difference between buying his ticket and riding on the train to Bolton and my shaving myself.

"However, the debating in the house about the Sabbath got very tiresome, and as it seemed to me it was impossible to settle the matter with my men by appealing to the Scriptures, I determined to try another plan, and, consequently, I arranged for a practical test of *their* kind of Sabbath. One Saturday morning, when we had all gathered at the breakfast-table, I gave notice that the next day would be sacredly kept as a Jewish Sabbath. I gave instructions that all must take special heed to what I told them. I said, 'You must kindle no fire; there must be no meat cooked; you must not go into your neighbour's house to boil the kettle; what cooking is done must be done to-day. We must be in the house without fire of any kind during the whole of to-morrow. Remember, my orders are imperative. There must not be a single exception—everyone must obey in this respect implicitly!'

"Some of the young men at first protested, but I was firm in my demands, and, consequently, when Sunday came we had no fire, a cold breakfast, and this, too, on a cold winter's morning. Some of the young men would not eat any breakfast at all, but the rest took what was set before them, asking no questions. When dinner came on there was still no fire, cold meat, and everything comfortless. Several young men had stopped away. At tea-time there was still no fire, and cold tea, but no one put in

an appearance except my wife and little daughter. At the tea-table all was very quiet and solemn ; but at last my daughter broke the silence. She wanted to know the meaning of the Sabbath we were keeping. I told her it was a Jewish Sabbath. She said, 'I do not like Jewish Sabbaths ; I like the Lord's Day better.' This seemed to be the conclusion to which all came, for it closed the discussion on the Sabbath question. Whether they were converted or not, they never sought to controvert my position again."

During this year there is only one letter of Mr. Coop's in the *Millennial Harbinger* which is of any striking interest, but this one is so characteristic of the man, and so thoroughly intimates his views as regards finances in the churches, as well as of systematic beneficence, that it is given entire.

" WIGAN, July 17th, 1850.

"I enclose you our contribution for the Evangelist Fund, and our brethren wish it to be distinctly understood that this is not the collection that was made on the first Lord's Day in July. They do not approve of the principle of giving one collection for that purpose either yearly or quarterly, but leave it with the ministers or servants of the congregation to give according to the funds in hand. Our brethren approve of general evangelists. They also approve of one fund in the church, and fear if a thirteenth part of the collection be appointed for missionary purposes, a sixteenth may be wanted for educational purposes, and a twentieth for something else, etc. Some of us here most decidedly disapprove of publishing our incomings and outgoings in the *Harbinger*. We cannot see either the necessity, the propriety, or the utility of stating these things to the world, of whom we never ask a shilling. Other brethren may see differently, but would it not be better for the secretary to get a number of slips struck off,

and sent to those churches who desire to have them, or to all the churches if thought more desirable? I am happy to inform you that we have had the pleasure of hearing a young man from the Wesleyans confess his faith in Jesus, and desire to be baptized into His name. He informed us that he had taken John Wesley's 'Notes on the New Testament' out of a library, and by reading these notes, and comparing them with the different texts, he became convinced that immersion was the only baptism appointed by Christ and His apostles. We hope for several more from the same quarter."

"T. COOP."

It will be seen that in the foregoing letter Mr. Coop again returns to the question of general evangelists. This matter was evidently regarded by him as of supreme importance. From the very beginning of his knowledge of the churches with which he became identified after his baptism, he was profoundly impressed with the necessity of securing able general evangelists to preach the gospel wherever a hearing could be obtained; and when, as already intimated in previous chapters, he found the brethren moving in the matter at their annual meetings and in their evangelists' reports, he was for a time very hopeful that something worthy in this direction would be undertaken. He was especially fascinated with the notion of securing American evangelists, since, as has been stated in a previous chapter, he believed that these would be far more effective in doing the work which was needed than any who could be secured at home.

This year the Annual Meeting was held at Nottingham,



and was presided over by his special friend Mr. James Wallis. The number of churches on the list is put down at eighty-three, the number reporting fifty-four, while the membership is stated at one thousand eight hundred and sixteen, which shows an increase over the previous year of nearly eight hundred. Mr. Coop was the delegate from the Wigan church, and the number of members in the Wigan church is reported as fifty-four, showing a decrease of eight on the previous year's report. This decrease, however, is easily accounted for by the fact that comparatively few accessions were made during the year, while considerable loss was sustained by removals and death. Amongst the latter was Mr. Joseph Mercer, whose remarkable baptism has already been mentioned.

The year 1851 opened with increasing prosperity in Mr. Coop's business, but was rather barren of religious results. During the early part of the year a union was formed, consisting of the Wigan, Liverpool, Leigh, and Whittle churches, denominated "The Lancashire District Association." In July the Annual Meeting of the churches was held in London, and Mr. Coop was again a delegate. Mr. James Wallis also again presided. There are no statistics of the churches given this year, though, by the report read to the meeting from Wigan, it will be seen that there were between eighty and ninety members in the district. This report from Wigan is so suggestive of Mr. Coop's earnest efforts to provide for disseminating the gospel that it is copied entire,

“ *Wigan.*—We have just held our district meeting, and we are instructed by the brethren assembled to inform you of our position, and also that we desire to be recognized as forming a part of the body of Christ. Our members in this district are from eighty to ninety. We appear to have been doing but little the past year to spread the truth around us. Sin, error, ignorance, bigotry, and delusion are spreading on every hand and in every form, so that it is almost impossible to gain the attention of an audience, to hear, believe, and obey the glorious gospel of the blessed God. We have purchased a number of tracts, dividing them among the churches, and purpose to lend them from house to house : by this means, and the proclamation of the gospel, we hope still to do something to benefit men, and to glorify God. What can be done to make known the gospel more fully and extensively in the various localities of the brethren, and throughout the world? Can nothing in the way of employing local and general evangelists be accomplished? Are there no good, holy, intelligent, active, laborious brethren in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, who could be employed in this *necessary* and good work? If we cannot get Peter, and Paul, and John, may we not obtain Timothy, Titus, Barnabas, and Apollos? Would it not be better to be doing a little with the men who could be found than to be doing nothing? Has it not been the case in the history of the Church and the world, that all great matters have had a small beginning? Has all been done which could have been done by the brethren to raise funds to carry out such an object? Have we all observed the apostolic rule, and given as the Lord hath prospered us? Have not the contributions of the brethren been withheld, because nothing has been done to bring out labourers in the Lord’s vineyard? Does not the conduct of the sects shame us? They spare neither pains, labour, money, nor men, to promote sectarianism ; and do we profess to teach the *truth as it is in Jesus*, and yet do very little in giving either money

or labour? We do not make these remarks in the way of dictation but merely as suggestions, for the purpose of calling your attention to the subject, and ascertaining if anything can be done to spread the truth more extensively, and restore again to the church the spirit and character of original Christianity, and the order and practice taught by the inspired apostles of Jesus."

While Mr. Coop and the church at Wigan were crying out for a general movement in evangelistic work, he was himself setting a worthy example as regards the matter which was so near his heart. He used every spare moment he could command in visiting the neighbouring towns, and during these visits he occasionally had a very trying experience. He himself records in his notes the following case in point :

"One day my brother came over to see me from St. Helens. He told me they had a wonderful Methodist preacher—a Dr. Moody—visiting them, and he was giving addresses in the Town Hall. He was going to speak on the Latter Day Saints. He was represented to be a wonderfully clever man. My brother was very anxious that I should go over and hear him. I told him, however, that I could not afford to waste my time, as his preacher would be sure to have it all his own way. But my brother insisted upon my going to hear him, and furthermore promised, as he was to be the chairman, that if the preacher said anything I did not believe was correct, I could reply to him. With this understanding I consented at last to go.

"The lecturer gave a powerful address against the practice of the Mormons, and then he came to their doctrines. When he came to speak of baptism he treated the matter very lightly. But, as far as he said anything, it was in the nature of a general

attack against 'believers' baptism, both as to mode and design. When he finished his lecture I arose, and asked if I might be permitted to make some reply to his statements on baptism. The hall was crowded to excess, and the platform was filled with local preachers and leading members of the Methodist church. The moment I mentioned baptism a signal was given from the platform, and there was a general clapping of hands, shouting, and stamping of feet. But I stood before them with my notes in my hands, very coolly remarking that I would wait until they had finished making such a noise. I said I was in no great hurry, and I could, therefore, have patience with them. I told them they would doubtless be willing to hear me shortly. Presently the question began to be asked, 'Who is he?' And then it was whispered round that I was the chairman's brother, and from Wigan. When quiet was restored I attempted to speak, but they began again to create a noise in the same manner as before. I waited till order was restored, and then began to speak, but a scene of confusion took place, in which shouting, whistling, and crowing like cocks were freely indulged in. The confusion was at times indescribable. At last some of the Methodists began to be ashamed, and tried to restore order. Finally, the Doctor got up and gave notice that he would preach a sermon on baptism in the Wesleyan Chapel the Sunday following. I immediately arose and thanked him for his announcement, at the same time stating that, God sparing me, I would go and hear, and if he did not convince me, or if he said anything contrary to the Scriptures, I would reply to him in that hall in a meeting to be announced.

"Accordingly, on Sunday, I went to hear what he had to say, and took full notes of his sermon. The morning following I was up at about four o'clock, and got out a large poster and had it stuck on the walls all over St. Helens, stating that I would reply to his sermon on baptism on the following Wednesday in the Town Hall. When the day arrived (August 20th, 1851), I took

some friends with me, and Mr. Turner to be my chairman. The hall was packed full before the time to begin the meeting. When all was ready I moved that Mr. Turner be requested to take the chair. A Methodist got up and moved as an amendment that Mr. Bailey, a local preacher of the Wesleyans, be requested to take the chair. I at once told the audience I knew Mr. Bailey very well, and I hoped they would all vote for him. When the matter was put to the meeting the vote was unanimous. He made a speech to the people, urging them to be very quiet and calm, or else Mr. Coop would have an advantage over them, for he knew Mr. Coop very well. He said we were old friends, and he begged them that they would be orderly, and that they should have a chance of speaking afterwards. They gave great attention to my speech, which occupied over an hour, and then I allowed questions to be asked. Several were put and answered, and then there was a stormy meeting, the most disorderly I was ever at in my life. They finished up by trying to pitch me off the platform. In leaving the meeting, while coming down the stairway, I passed a rough fellow, who said, 'If they call this behaviour and Christianity, I'll be d——d before I'll be a Christian. They have not played fair with the Wigan man.'

"One of the leading men in the town—a Mr. Shanks at the glass works—sent me a letter the following morning, thanking me for coming forward and defending the Baptists."

The following paragraph, which is copied from the September number of the *Millennial Harbinger* of that year, gives some account of what Mr. Coop said in his lecture :—

"The lecturer, having explained the reasons which had induced him to appear before them, and commented upon the opposition which prevented him from stating his views at the conclusion of

a lecture on Mōrmonism, proceeded to expatiate upon the importance of the subject, and the frequency of discussions concerning it. After alluding to infant baptism creeping into the Church as it became connected with the State, and imbued with the influence of the 'man of sin,' he showed from Scripture who were the proper subjects of baptism, and the mode or action in which the rite was administered. Having established these parts of the argument, he proved, by various extracts from the Divine Word, that there was no analogy between infant baptism and circumcision, concluding by instancing the sermon of Peter on the day of Pentecost.—At the close of the lecture a lengthened discussion ensued, those who differed from the lecturer contending that baptism was not essential to salvation.—Mr. Coop, in reply, said the Saviour had placed it on record, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' He then proposed a vote of thanks to the chairman.—Mr. Turner seconded the motion, urging all present to read the Scriptures for themselves, and not to take for granted what anybody says. He had been a Wesleyan minister, and had preached in the Wesleyan Chapel in that town, and frequently in the surrounding villages and other parts of the country, for a period of twenty years. His attention was directed to this important subject. He read, considered, deliberated upon it, and after earnest prayer, was immersed into the name of Jesus. For that act alone, after twenty years' labour as a local preacher, he was suspended; but he did not regret the step he took. The proceedings lasted three hours."

Just after this lecture, a Methodist came over from St. Helens to Wigan to see Mr. Coop, and make further inquiries about what he had heard at the Town Hall meeting. He spent one Lord's Day at Wigan, attending the meetings at the church there morning and evening,

and at the close of the evening meeting made confession and was baptized by Mr. Coop. This gentleman soon found out several others in St. Helens who were like minded, and the result was a church was started there, and has been continued to the present time.

The only letter of any special value from Mr. Coop found in the *Millennial Harbinger* of this year is the following, which shows his active interest in behalf of the cause outside of Wigan as well as at home.

“WIGAN, *October 10th*, 1851.

“DEAR BROTHER,—It is now a long time since I heard from you, and should be glad to have a few lines. I desire to express my gratitude and delight for your past services in the kingdom of Jesus. Almost every day there are fresh proofs that your labour and toil have not been in vain. Everyone here is delighted with the visit of two sisters from Walneydib, a small island in the north of Lancashire, about twenty miles from Fleetwood. A sketch of their history would, no doubt, gladden your heart, as it has done ours; but I have my doubts whether it would be well to put it in the *Harbinger*. I may say, that about three years ago, a brother from Scotland went to that island, for the purpose of fishing, and made arrangements to build a hut upon the land of one of the sisters. While building, fishing, etc., he did not forget to fish for men and women; he preached the Word to all that came to him, and his labour was not lost. Three females became obedient to the faith, and were baptised, a mother and two daughters. The opposition and persecution which they have met with have been very great; but the Lord has sustained them. They lament greatly that no opportunity is afforded them to meet with the brethren on the first day of the week, but that is out of

the question,\* as there is not another Disciple on the island. The brother has left and gone back to Scotland, the speculation not answering his purpose. One thing greatly pleased me: the brother who thus immersed them, before leaving, introduced the *Harbinger* to their notice, and they informed me that it was a great service and comfort to them. Indeed, they now only read the Bible and the *Harbinger*, and it was through this medium that they learned of there being a church in Wigan; and as they were going to spend some time in Fleetwood, they determined to pay us a visit, and to break bread with us on the first day of the week. The day following I was under an engagement to visit Wales, so that our interview was very short; but I understand they stopped Lord's Day over, and were very much refreshed in mind by their visit. On Saturday morning, Brother Davies, residing near Bolton, Brother Turner, and myself took a trip to Chester, Mollington, Wrexham, and Rhosllanerchrugog. We returned yesterday, and a most delightful tour it has been. The Welsh people are indeed warm-hearted and affectionate; and for kindness and hospitality, I think they excel. There is a very strong feeling of sympathy and affection towards you for your valuable services as editor of the *Harbinger*. Many of the most intelligent members said it had been of great service to them individually, and that much good was resulting from its circulation among them. On Monday, October 13th, a number of brethren met at Rosmeway, for the purpose of trying to publish a small *Harbinger* there in the Welsh language, and it was resolved to commence the first number in January, 1852; the price is to be one penny monthly. I hope and trust that it may be of very great service. It appears that Brother Hill, from Sunderland, has been labouring among them very satisfactorily for several weeks past.

"Yours truly,

"T. COOP."



The years 1852 and 1853 were not specially notable for any important events in the history of Mr. Coop. These were years of settling down after the exciting scenes beginning in 1848. In 1852 Lord John Russell brought forward his promised reform measures, which included a lowering of the borough and county franchise, a redistribution of seats, and the removal of Jewish disabilities. However, as there was a change of ministry no definite action was taken. The Duke of Wellington died at Walmer Castle, September 14th, in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

In 1853, it was under the Aberdeen Coalition Ministry that Mr. Gladstone, for the first time, filled the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer. His budget proposed a scheme for the gradual reduction of the national debt, and as he greatly lightened the taxes the budget gave widespread satisfaction. The succession duty was designed to break down the feudal immunity of real property from taxation. This was the beginning of a new era in the business affairs of the country, and from this time prospects began to brighten, and Mr. Coop, in company with all other active business men, began to share some of the good results.

Much of his time during these years was taken up with his business, though he still continued to work heartily with the brethren at Wigan, as well as preaching in adjoining towns wherever opportunity offered. The yearly meeting of the churches was held in 1852 at

Buckingham, and the whole number of members is reported 1,981, while the number for the Wigan church is set down at forty-seven, showing a continued decrease in the membership.

At the beginning of the year, Mr. George Sinclair, one of the brethren at Wigan, was appointed evangelist for that district, thus putting into practical operation the principles for which Mr. Coop had so earnestly contended.

The Annual Meeting of 1853 was held at Wigan, and was presided over by Mr. J. K. Tener. The number of churches on the list is put down at eighty-one, and the number reporting at sixty-six, while the number of members is stated as 1,932. The church at Wigan recorded fifty-three. On the evening of July 28th a public meeting was held in the Commercial Hall. At this meeting Mr. Coop presided, but occupied no time in making an address. Three addresses, however, were made, one of which was by Mr. Haigh, who had baptized Mr. Coop. Mr. Haigh said :—

“That if they looked at the subject of evangelical reform through the medium of the numerous sects into which Christendom had become divided, teaching contradictory things both in matters of doctrine and faith, as well as in church government, they would be led to the conclusion, that the difficulties in the way were insurmountable; but if they looked at it from another point of view, the difficulties would vanish. Was there an infallible standard by which they could go? Yes, there was such a standard in the gospel. If all the numerous sects into which the Christian world is now divided, could find any authority in the Bible for what

they taught, then the Bible was the most contradictory book in the universe; but this was not the case—the cause of this diversity was not to be found in God's Word. Men should not make the Scriptures bend to the creeds, but make the creeds conform to what was taught by Christ and His Apostles. The best way of promoting evangelical reform was, not to make direct attacks upon existing churches, but to set forth the primitive Church of Christ in all its beauty, so that men might see and embrace it. Mr. Haigh then referred to the last commission of the Lord Jesus to His Apostles, as recorded by St. Mark, and commented on it at considerable length, calling upon all present to repent of their sins, go to God through Christ, and believe the Gospel and be baptized. He also quoted a great number of passages of Scripture in support of what he believed to be the true faith. He particularly referred to baptism, which, he argued, was necessary, and combated with the doctrine of infant sprinkling."

As Mr. Sinclair was now the district evangelist for Wigan, the reports from that district are all found in his name instead of the name of Mr. Coop, who before Mr. Sinclair's appointment did the corresponding for the church. In one of Mr. Sinclair's reports he refers to the fact that some charged them with making the way of salvation very easy, "if going down into the water will wash away sins." But Mr. Sinclair repudiates the doctrine implied in this statement. He distinctly affirms that going down into the water does not wash away sins. He declares that the efficacy of baptism for the remission of sins is because it is "*in the name of Jesus.*" This was a favourite notion of Mr. Coop. He often referred to it

in the later years of his life. He held that immersion in water amounted to nothing if considered apart from the name of Jesus. It was this name that gave meaning to the act of baptism. Indeed, this idea so possessed Mr. Coop, in the early part of his life, after his own baptism, that he did not baptize "*into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,*" but only "*in the name of Jesus.*" This is said to have been his practice until his first marriage, when he united this formula with the usual one, baptizing "*in the name of Jesus, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*" Doubtless, Mr. Coop's notion in regard to this matter was founded on a misunderstanding of what was implied in the phrase, "*in the name.*" There is a vast difference between "*in the name*" and "*into the name.*" The first implies *authority*, the last *relationship*. The Greek of the first is *en too onomati*, and the Greek of the second is *eis to onoma*. But Mr. Coop found, in the commission, as recorded by Matthew, that the translators took no note of the difference between the two phrases in the Greek. He was doubtless led into the supposition that no difference really existed, such as we have indicated. However, the Revised Version has now translated *eis to onoma* by "*into the name,*" and this is as it should be.

Nevertheless, the point to which attention has been called, as regards the view of Mr. Coop, is an important one. He did not believe that mere immersion in water had any power to deal with sin. He held firmly to the

doctrine that the blood of Christ alone could cleanse from sin. By consulting his letters, which are found in preceding chapters, it will be seen that he held strongly to the sacrifice of Christ as the only atonement for sin. But he held that baptism was God's appointed means through which the penitent believer receives the assurance of pardon, for when this baptism is in the name of Jesus, the subject of it, if a penitent believer, has the pledge of the Lord Himself that he shall be saved or pardoned. In other words, Mr. Coop held that it is through faith, repentance, confession, and baptism that the sinner appropriates the blessings of the atonement which Christ has made, and that the knowledge of remission of sins is practically assured through the promises which are made in the gospel to those who believe and obey it. He called attention to the fact that baptism is not the water, as this is only the element in which the baptism takes place ; nor again is baptism any of the attending circumstances, though these are required in order that the baptism may be rightly performed ; but the baptism itself is a solemn act of surrender on the part of the individual, and being in the name or by the authority of our Divine Lord, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it becomes at once associated with the most powerful agencies in the universe, and cannot, therefore, fail of its design if it is entered into according to the stipulated conditions where it is commanded.

It is thought well to clear this matter up at once, as

doubtless some will think, from the frequent reference which is made to baptism, that Mr. Coop attached an undue importance to it. But from his point of view, at any rate, this was not the case. He did not attach any importance to it if it was not associated with faith, repentance, confession, the name of Jesus, the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the promises which God had made to those obeying the gospel. But, in association with all these, baptism, with him, was one of the most solemn acts that ever any creature performed. It was the formal entrance of the soul into the most sacred covenant with the Lord Jesus, and could not, therefore, be well over-estimated in its importance, if properly understood and appreciated. This is why Mr. Coop and his friends were so earnest about impressing the duty of baptism upon all who desired to follow the Lord. And this earnestness was no doubt intensified by the fact that so many religious teachers seemed to be almost indifferent to the importance of the ordinance in the plan of salvation. At any rate, the foregoing are the reasons which influenced Mr. Coop and his brethren in constantly urging the duty of baptism upon all who claimed to love and honour the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DEATH OF WIFE AND SECOND MARRIAGE.

THE year 1854 was memorable in Mr. Coop's history.

At the close of the preceding year (December 10th), his little daughter Lois made confession of her faith in Christ, and was baptized, much to the joy of Mr. Coop. This daughter had been a great comfort to him, and she was now dearer to him than ever before, because of her early consecration to the Divine Master. When she was baptized she was in the tenth year of her age. Doubtless this will appear to some as very young for an intelligent faith and baptism. But it must be remembered that she had been brought up at the feet of a godly father and mother, who had spared no pains in her religious training. It was a theory of Mr. Coop, even thus early, that children should be encouraged to become members of the Church as soon as they could exercise an intelligent faith in the Saviour. This was a favourite idea of his until the day of his death. He always took the greatest interest in children, and very frequently in his public addresses he reproved parents for hindering

their children from entering the kingdom of God rather than helping them into it.

On March 1st of this year he had the misfortune to lose his devoted wife. She had been in failing health for some time before the final end was reached. She was a devoted helpmeet and earnest Christian worker, and heartily sympathised and co-operated with Mr. Coop in his labours. She was well read for one of her opportunities, and very energetic. She had a class of young women, whom she taught sewing, reading, etc., and when, on account of increasing duties and impaired health, she could not work as energetically as heretofore, she was a ready supporter of others who could work. Mr. Coop was accustomed to say that she had a line of poetry for everything, or an appropriate verse of Scripture. She was very fond of reading, and especially history, but this was never allowed to interfere with her duties as a wife and mother. She had never been very strong, but at last she was attacked by complicated bronchitis, which continued to make inroads upon her health until finally her frail constitution broke completely down. But her faith in Christ was unwavering, and she at last fell asleep in Jesus, Who is the Resurrection and the Life.

This sad event for a time had a very serious effect upon Mr. Coop's mind. He was very affectionate, and, consequently, felt very keenly the loss of one who had been his steadfast helper and wise counsellor through the



twelve years of their married life. He, however, had such strong confidence in the overruling providence of God, and that, consequently, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose," that even this family disaster was not allowed to cast its shadow over his home for any length of time. He at once threw himself into his business with more earnestness than ever before, working early and late, and also increased his active services in religious work.

About this time there was considerable agitation in the town of Wigan concerning short hours. A number of meetings were held to consider the matter, but nothing was definitely decided. Mr. Coop was in the habit of closing between nine and ten o'clock at night on every day except Saturday, and on that day he closed at midnight. Notwithstanding the agitation reached no definite conclusion, Mr. Coop decided upon a radical change in the interests of his *employés*. Consequently he placarded the town and county that his shop would close every night at seven o'clock, except Saturday night, and on that night at nine o'clock. This act produced considerable talk, some people affirming that Mr. Coop was crazy, while those who were engaged in the same business as he was greatly rejoiced at his act, thinking that they would be able thereby to pick up some of his customers. It proved, indeed, to be a somewhat trying experiment, as he frequently, after closing his own shop, passed the shops

of his rivals<sup>o</sup> and found his customers purchasing at their counters. He was, however, inexorable in his purpose, as he felt the deepest interest in the question at stake, and the final outcome was a great success, for it proved to be, upon the whole, the best business year he had ever had, and also gave him more time for the Lord's work.

The Annual Meeting of the churches this year was held at Wrexham during the first three days of August, Mr. Coop presiding. The number of churches on the list was seventy-nine, reported sixty-seven, membership one thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight, being an increase of sixty-six members over the previous year. The Wigan church reported twelve baptisms for the year and fifty-nine members, giving a net increase of six on the previous year. The following extract from the report, to which Mr. Coop's name is signed, is interesting, as indicating the character of these annual meetings, and especially the growing spirit of unity which they emphasised.

“Assuming no legislative functions, and abstaining altogether from any interference with the internal government of the churches represented, it was the subject of general inquiry what it was that had given to these annual assemblages of the brethren such a decidedly permanent character, the idea of their discontinuance finding no place. Every year, as the mere business duties of the conference become more and more matters of bare routine, the conference itself manifestly increases in vitality and power, and its continued existence becomes more and more to be regarded in the light of a positive necessity. The reason was

rejoicingly discovered to be in the self-revealing power of the truth, unfettered, as it stands in relation to this movement by the clogging hand of human legislation. All felt the ground widening around them into a large place, and stretching with grand prospects into the future. All felt, too, how sweet and how pleasant it was for brethren to meet together in unity, and would have found in this alone a sufficient reason for meeting again, though the prospect of rejoicing together in the future triumphs of the gospel had been less cheering."

It has already been mentioned that at the death of Mr. John Ackroyd his brother William came into possession of the business which Mr. Coop managed, and that Mr. Coop was taken into partnership with him. However, from the time of the partnership, Mr. Coop had practically charge of the entire business, Mr. Ackroyd having removed to Clapham Common, London, and only visiting Wigan occasionally. In the year 1854 he went on a visit to Margate, taking his family with him, and travelling in his own coach. On his return he stopped all night at a village where the black fever was raging. The fever seized him and he died at the end of September, leaving a wife and four daughters.

After the death of Mr. Ackroyd, Mr. Coop came into possession of the entire business, and from this time forward it was conducted under the title of "T. Coop, Clothier and Draper."

Another important event took place this year. After the death of his wife, Mr. Coop was left alone with his little daughter. She was too young to be of any help to

him in his domestic affairs, and she herself was just at the age when she needed the companionship of some trustworthy person who could direct her education, and by setting before her a worthy example inspire her with the ideal of a true character. He also had living with him a number of young men who were employed in his business, and these added to the responsibility of his domestic affairs. This state of things impressed upon Mr. Coop the importance of a second marriage. However, he did not at first think of this as likely to happen in the near future. But a somewhat singular circumstance brought the matter to a conclusion much more rapidly than he had anticipated.

One day he was at Huddersfield, buying woollen cloth of his friend Mr. John Haigh, and in the course of conversation the question of a second marriage was broached. Mr. Haigh asked Mr. Coop if he had seen anyone who was likely to fill up the gap which had been made by the loss of his wife. Mr. Coop answered that he had not—had not even thought seriously about the matter. Mr. Haigh intimated that he knew a lady who would just suit him, and if he (Mr. Coop) would go home with him and stop for the night at his house, he would take him after tea to see the lady to whom he referred. Mr. Coop agreed to go with him, and as the rest of the story so fully illustrates a phase of his character, it is deemed best to give the whole account in his own words. He says :—

"After we had finished our business together we went over to the house of my friend (Mr. Haigh), and while waiting for our tea a young lady made her appearance. I was introduced to her as Miss Ellen Haigh, the daughter of my friend. Until then even I did not know he had a daughter. But I was at once interested in her appearance, and especially so in view of the conversation I had just had with her father, in which had been suggested the advisability of a second marriage. She began at once to get our tea ready, while I was just as busy in watching her movements.

"After tea Mr. Haigh was ready to go and take me to his friend's house to see the young lady to whom he had promised to introduce me. She was the daughter of a large woollen manufacturer, and lived some distance off. I at once began to make some excuses, stating that upon the whole I was inclined to give up the visit, and go and call on one of Mr. Haigh's married sons whom I was anxious to see. He agreed to this, and, therefore, we did not carry out our first intention. The fact is, something had happened which made his proposition to me no longer interesting. I had unexpectedly found the woman that met my fancy without going any farther.

"The following morning I was up before seven o'clock, and found Miss Haigh moving about looking after breakfast. The thought occurred to me, It is now or never; so I enquired of her if she had a piano, and if she could play it. After receiving an affirmative reply, I said I would like to hear her play. She thereupon took me into the drawing-room and played a piece very sweetly. I then wanted to look inside the piano, as I told her I was interested in pianos, being an agent for a large maker. But while looking into the piano, I somehow or other stumbled upon her, and in apologising I said, 'This is the piano I want to see.' What followed I need not tell, but this was the beginning of what afterwards resulted in a very happy second marriage."

In planning for the wedding it was decided to give what Mr. Coop called a "scriptural feast," to which were invited the poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind. He took the public hall in Wigan, and had it splendidly fitted up and decorated. The tables were laden with all kinds of eatables. Indeed, a most sumptuous feast was prepared. Four hundred invitations were sent out, a supply being sent to ministers of all religious denominations, both Protestant and Catholic, and also to a "nest of infidels" whom he had found out. The only condition was that the tickets should not be given to persons who were paupers, but only to the poor.

When the time came the streets were filled with people. Some were blind, others lame, being carried on the backs of their neighbours. The hall had only been opened a short time before, and it was a very fine building. All parties availed themselves of the invitation without questioning, except the Catholics, who had to consult their priests, and wanted to know if there would be any worship. However, they got consent to attend, and, consequently, all classes were represented. All the clergy and dissenting ministers were invited as speakers; even the infidels were informed that they also should speak if they so desired. However, while they accepted the invitation to attend they declined to take part in the meeting.

When this motley crowd had all got into the hall, and the light was turned on, they seemed utterly amazed, and

tears freely flowed from many eyes. Nothing like it had ever before been seen in Wigan, and for twenty years afterwards persons would meet Mr. Coop and stop him in the street, to tell him of their attendance at his wedding party.

The following lines were contributed to the occasion :—

TO MY DEAR FRIENDS MR. AND MRS. COOP.

“Marriage is honourable in all.”—HEB. xiii. 4.

WITH kindest designs, I transmit these few lines,  
To the bride and the bridegroom address'd ;  
If I share not your feast, in this manner at least,  
My wish for your weal is express'd.

God's blessing from heaven, on your marriage be given,  
His guidance your footsteps attend !  
May your comfort and peace thro' your journey increase,  
And brighten your path at the end !

The world cannot show, in relation below,  
A kindred more sacred than this ;  
Even Adam's estate, while he wanted a mate,  
Was void of the crown of its bliss.

Let the hermit go dwell, alone in his cell,  
In solitude dreary and dull ;  
Let the monast'ry boast its bachelor host,  
And its prison, the nunnery full.

But mark, how the sages renown'd in past ages  
Took on them the dear social band !  
Though pilgrims and strangers, they press'd the dangers,  
Their lov'd ones they led by the hand.

The Lord of the just, when He sojourn'd in dust,  
A guest at a wedding was found ;  
And happy the lot of that couple whose cot  
With the presence of Jesus was crown'd.

That famous Apostle, who open'd the Gospel  
To Jew and the Gentile in turn,  
The Evangelist shows, was no gloomy recluse,—  
Saint Peter was married, we learn.

(Then far from devotion, and sinless the notion,  
\*That censures so honor'd a rite ;  
Such vain superstition we treat with derision,  
When guided by Truth's blessed light.)

Yet cares may encumber, and many their number,  
But we have a Father above ;  
He says that your care must by faith and by prayer,  
Be cast on the arm of His love.

In passing life's ocean, the tempest's commotion  
May threaten at times to o'erwhelm ;  
Let mutual affection still have the direction,  
And piety sit at the helm.

Like that hero of old, in religion so bold,  
Who the scoff of the scorner defied ;  
"For yourselves ye may choose, but I and my house  
Will be the Lord's servants"—he cried.

Thrice bless'd is that union of souls in communion,  
United in love to the Lord ;  
Both join'd in one spirit, prepar'd to inherit  
The glory revealed in His word.

But who can declare how the strangers to prayer,  
Shall their meeting hereafter abide ?  
Or who can conceive how that couple must grieve,  
Whom death shall for ever divide ?

Whatever our station, or earthly relation,  
The time for its ending draws on ;  
Those join'd to the Saviour are kindred for ever,  
And they shall sit down on His throne.

J. HARBOTTLE.



This wedding-feast incident illustrates another phase in Mr. Coop's character. He had the greatest sympathy with the poor, but this was not all that influenced him in giving such a party. It was a result of his great reverence for the Scriptures, and his tendency to interpret these Scriptures in the most literal fashion. With him the Word of God meant what it said, and any command of the Saviour was with him the end of all discussion. It was not eccentricity which impelled him to take this course, though some people imagined that this was at the bottom of his curious party, as well as of many other things he did. He was at that period of his life, strictly speaking, a literalist in his interpretations of the Bible ; not that he had no respect to the metaphorical language of the Scriptures. He understood very well the laws of figurative language, and was always careful to discriminate between the literal and the figurative when the difference was clearly indicated : but he had little or no respect for what has been called spiritualising the Scriptures, and this led him to take the most matter-of-fact view of everything found in the Word of God. This tendency in his interpretation of the Scriptures had both good and evil in it. It was precisely this characteristic of his mind which enabled him to see baptism as he finally came to look at it. But the same characteristic had a strong tendency to harden his charity for those who differed with him, as well as to magnify some small things into matters of great importance. However, he gradually

grew out of the evil results of this mental tendency, and in the long run his sticking close to the Scriptures was a great advantage to him: it gave consistency and unity to his thinking, and led him in his conduct to seek reverently to walk in all the commandments of his Divine Lord.

During the next two years Mr. Coop was chiefly engaged in business matters, though he did not fail to give attention to religious work whenever he had the time and opportunity at command. The yearly meetings of the churches in 1856 and 1857 were held at Manchester, but few matters of special importance came before the meetings. The reports showed a little upward tendency in the condition of the churches, but the main point of progress noted was the better organization of the churches, and some effective work done in district co-operation. The church at Wigan just about held its own, though there was some increase of activity in evangelistic work.

In 1857, a small church was started at Earlstown. This church was the result of the founding of the St. Helens church. Several members came from the Independents, but owing to what Mr. Coop characteristically called "the apostolic disease" getting in among them they became scattered, and little or no good was accomplished. Finally, the Rev. Brewin Grant was sent for by those who were opposed to the new church, and this gentleman gave several discourses on baptism, challenging anyone who

was willing to discuss the question of baptism to meet him in debate. He and his friends appeared very anxious to have a discussion, and as no one seemed able to contend with him Mr. Coop at last determined to try what he could do. He accordingly attended one of the meetings, and when the reverend gentleman made some bold statements about the early practice of infant baptism and sprinkling, evidently making light of the practice of immersion, Mr. Coop became somewhat anxious to measure the strength of his cause with what the reverend gentleman was saying ; and, consequently, when a pressing invitation was given to any who wished to ask questions, Mr. Coop arose and referred to what Mr. Grant had said about the sprinkling of children in the early history of the church. And after having stated that no well-read scholar disputed that immersion was baptism, and that it was the general practice from the time of Christ to the beginning of the fourteenth century, he then went on to make an offer to the Rev. Brewin Grant to the effect that if he (Mr. Grant) would find one case of sprinkling a baby or an adult, except in cases of sick persons, for the space of a thousand years after the death of Christ, he (Mr. Coop) would give him one thousand pounds.

This proposition produced a profound sensation, and the audience were in no humour to listen to any further arguments, *pro* or *con*, on the question under consideration. They saw that Mr. Coop's method was *practical*, and Mr. Grant saw that if he did not meet

the proposition in some way his cause would be lost. He, therefore, boasted that he would soon make application for the money, for it would not be difficult to find a case. But, according to Mr. Coop's testimony, Mr. Grant *never* applied for the money. However, the effect of the proposition was not lost; the people remembered his straightforward, matter-of-fact test; and after this, whenever the question of baptism was discussed in the neighbourhood, this £1,000 proposition was generally referred to as the most potent argument that could be presented. Whether Mr. Coop was safe or not in his proposition, it shows clearly how practical he was in his methods. He was a man of facts, and when these were not forthcoming he had little or no patience with mere talk. Often when his friends discussed matters with him, and began to repeat what they had already stated, he would say, "But there is nothing new in that. You are only repeating what you have already said; if you have any fresh facts state them, but if not let us go on to something else." He was a man of few words, and could not bear a mere logomachy.

For some time the Wigan church had been considering the matter of a more scriptural organisation, and finally, in January 1858, John Corf, William McDougall, and Timothy Coop were elected pastors, and these were requested to select for approval by the church two brethren qualified to sustain the office of deacon, the election of whom would take place subsequently. This

brought Mr. Coop into official association with two very excellent men. Mr. McDougall was a most effective preacher, and was one of the most successful proclaimers of the gospel among those who were at that time associated in the movement with which Mr. Coop was connected.

With a view to getting in a more eligible position and better accommodations, the church decided to build a new house of worship in Rodney Street. The foundation-stone for this building was laid on June 28th, 1858. Mr. Coop and many other brethren were present, together with a number of hearers from other religious bodies. The stone was laid by Mr. Corf, one of the pastors recently appointed. In the stone was deposited the following record :—

“ This building was erected by the Church of Christ who, up to the present time, met for worship in School Street, Wigan ; who pleaded for and practised a return to primitive Christianity, as taught in the New Testament, and practised by the Apostles and first Christians. Holding Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinners, and Head of the Church, and His Word as of supreme authority: thus believing and practising, this church has increased from two members, who first began to meet in 1841, to attend to the institutions of the Lord's house, every first day of the week, and have continued so to do up to this present time. The church now numbers sixty-eight members. There is also a Sunday-school in connection with this church, the number of scholars on the books being one hundred and thirty, and seventeen teachers.”

Copies of the monthly publications in connection with the church, namely, the *British Millennial Harbinger*, the *Christian Advocate*, and the *Sunbeam*, were also enclosed in the bottle, as well as those of the *Wigan Observer* and *Examiner*.

After Mr. Corf had made a few remarks, Mr. Coop delivered an address, and as this address contains an account of Mr. Coop's conversion, and introduces some new and interesting facts, it is thought best to give it entire so far as it is reported in the *Harbinger*. Mr. Coop said :—

“It seemed befitting to notice the origin and progress of the people for whom the building was about to be erected, and as the movement in behalf of primitive Christianity in that town originated with himself, he should be compelled to speak oftener of himself than he wished, for which he offered this apology. When primitive Christianity found him, he was a member of the Wesleyan body—the *honourable old* body—and he then thought it the purest representation of Christianity upon earth; but circumstances connected with the preaching of the Rev. R. Smethurst, and the visit of a Yorkshire traveller, commenced the work of convincing him not only of his own grievous defects, but also of those of his own church. Mr. Smethurst, who was a Wesleyan minister, preached on one occasion from the Acts of the Apostles, selecting for his observations the passage relative to Philip and the eunuch; and, after reading the narrative, closed the book with the remark, that he had examined the map and could find no river, and therefore he thought the eunuch must have had a bowl, and that Philip sprinkled him. This struck him (Mr. Coop) as something very remarkable, for he had no

idea of two men going into and coming out of a bowl. His attention being thus awakened, he began to enquire into the matter, when a friend with whom he conversed referred him to the sixteenth chapter of Mark, which contained the following words : ' He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ' .(ver. 16). This, after much painful exercise of mind and investigation of the Scriptures, decided him to become obedient to the Lord. He was cut off from the religious body which he had loved from his heart, not being permitted to remain as a teacher in the Sunday-school when he had renounced infant-sprinkling as baptism. After this change of mind he could not continue among the Methodists ; and he knew nothing of the Baptists, although he had been baptized. The result was that, after visiting from house to house, he found a man who agreed to meet with him for the purpose of examining the Scriptures, and being convinced ultimately that Jesus is the Christ, he became obedient ; and they two met as a church in his own cellar, under the promise of the Saviour, ' where two or three are assembled together, I will be with them.' This proceeding caused them to be preached against from all the pulpits, and the various sects spoke continually against them. Such was the origin, after which the congregation increased until they took a room, and subsequently they met in the Commercial Hall, and afterwards in another place ; but they never asked for a farthing from any man who was not a member. In course of time they asked a favour of the Baptists, that of allowing two persons to be baptized in their baptistery ; but as they wished to be baptized ' for the remission of sins,' this was refused. They then set about the late chapel in School Street, where they formed a baptistery of their own. Now they wished others to enjoy the privileges of which they had partaken, and therefore they took the present means of enlarging their place of worship. They had seen the foundation-stone of the new building laid, and that, too, by a brother whom they truly loved, and whose children, he

hoped, would rise after him as living stones in the temple of God. The sittings would be entirely free, and no boxes would be sent round. The public might witness their order of worship, and he hoped the place would prove a blessing to all around them."

One or two matters ought not to be overlooked in this address. It will be seen that the habit of the church at this time was to ask contributions from only members of the church. It will be seen also that the sittings of the new building were to be entirely free, and that no collection in the usual way would be made. It will be seen also why it was that the Baptists were not willing to have these brethren use their baptistery. Nor is it difficult to understand from these intimations of the faith and practice of Mr. Coop and his brethren why they were unpopular with the religious bodies by whom they were surrounded. They were undoubtedly "a peculiar people," but as they were "zealous of good works" they were generally respected by the people of the town, though by a great many regarded as extremely heretical.

As evidence of how rapidly this house was pushed to completion, it may be stated that it was ready for occupancy on October 24th, only three and a half months from the time the foundation-stone was laid. The following account of the leaving of the old house and the entering of the new is contributed by one of the pastors, Mr. William McDougall, to the *Harbinger* for December of the same year :—



"The last Lord's Day (October 17th) we spent in our meeting-house was on many accounts a pleasant season. Morning and evening it was filled with worshippers and hearers. And best of all, the brethren seemed full of profitable reflections on the past of their history—'the days of small things'—the manifold and blessed evidence that *the Lord* had not despised these days—the twos and threes worshipping in the lowly cellar, issuing in an increase emboldening them to build the school and meeting-house—the good hand of the Lord upholding them in all their weaknesses, pardoning all their faults, succeeding their feeble attempts to serve Him in the gospel of His Son with signal blessing, and now opening a clear path for a larger place of worship and a more effective position. Humility and gratitude flowed apace from every lip, and from many tearful eyes. And to crown all, the last exhibition made by the brethren in the old place of the saving love of God in His Christ, was met with a full and earnest response in the confession of His name by two men—one in his maturity, the other a youth, who were straightway baptized into Him, according to their desire and the Word of God.

"On Lord's Day, October 24th, at seven in the morning, we opened our new meeting-house in Rodney Street, by prayer to the Father of all our mercies. Upwards of sixty brethren were present, and at half-past ten it was comfortably filled. Worship, reading the Divine Word, and the reception of the brethren baptized the preceding Lord's Day, occupied the whole of the time. In the afternoon upwards of two hundred brethren and friends took tea together in the schoolroom. There were brethren from Manchester, St. Helens, and Huddersfield. The churches at Newton, Bolton, and Leigh closed their doors that day, to express their hearty fellowship in our joy. After tea tokens of the church's esteem, love, and gratitude for the character and services of Pastors Corf and Coop were presented, to the former in a noble

copy of the noblest of books, and to the latter in that of one of the best assistants to its literature, Kitto's Cyclopædia, etc.—In the evening a crowded audience listened to our faithful and highly esteemed Brother Sinclair, from Whitehaven (whose glad welcome among his old companions in the gospel it was good to see), and to our much loved Brother Tickle, of Liverpool.

“On Tuesday evening, October 20th, more than sixty persons were present at our usual Bible conference, and three men have presented themselves as inquirers after the right ways of the Lord. Subsequently, seven persons have confessed their faith in Jesus the Christ—five men and two women. Our Lord's Day and two week evening meetings continue to be well attended. We bow our heads in thankful praise, and take fresh courage.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

### NEW TESTS AND EXPERIENCES.

THE year 1859 marks an important era in Mr. Coop's religious history. It was practically the beginning of a controversy which has been continued ever since, and which has been fraught with perhaps more evil than good. The Annual Meeting of the churches was held this year at Birmingham, and was presided over by Mr. G. Y. Tickle. The number of churches on the list is put down at eighty-six, number reporting seventy-four, number of members 2,475. During the meeting the following resolution was passed :—

“ Reports having been circulated in this country, that some of the Churches of the Disciples in America admit unbaptized persons to the Lord's table, it is requested that enquiry be made to ascertain the truth of the matter, by the Chairman of this meeting, to Brother Alexander Campbell, and that the reply be published in the *British Millennial Harbinger*.”

It has already been stated that the “Churches of Christ” in this country differed somewhat from the same churches in America on the Communion question. But until this

meeting at Birmingham the matter had never received any official attention, and certainly very few thought seriously of making the question a source of contention between the churches of the two countries. However, partly through exaggerated reports concerning the practice of the churches in America, and partly through the narrowing tendency of some of the leaders of the movement here, the preceding resolution was thought by some to be necessary, and it was consequently passed. In accordance with this resolution Mr. Tickle wrote a letter to Mr. Campbell, and as this letter is of the utmost importance in the case under consideration, it is thought proper to give it entire. It is as follows :—

“20, GLOUCESTER PLACE, LOW HILL, LIVERPOOL,

“*Sept. 1st, 1859.*

“DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER CAMPBELL,—The above resolution, you will observe, charges me, as chairman of the meeting, with the duty of bringing it under your notice. I hope you will kindly allow me to say, that I do no more than follow the promptings of my own ‘fervent mind towards you,’ when, as faithfully representing the spirit and tone of the meeting, I address you, on the subject of which the resolution treats, in the most respectful and affectionate manner.

“The facts, as far as the churches in this country are concerned, are these. They conceive they have maintained a strict adherence to apostolic practice, in excluding all unbaptized persons, knowing them to be such, from the Lord’s table. They regard any deviation from the terms of the ‘great commission,’ as involving a denial of the authority of the Lord Jesus on the very threshold of His kingdom. They view it, moreover, as an ignoble abandon-

ment of the ground, to maintain which so many eager battles have been waged by yourself and other champions of the Reformation, and upon which, it has been so repeatedly affirmed, the union of all Christians is alone practicable, viz., 'the supreme authority of *the one Lord*.'

"Every day and every hour makes the duty more apparent, on the part of those actively engaged in proclaiming the gospel in this country, of grasping, with increased energy and firmness, the glorious standard thus inscribed as the rallying-point of a scattered, confused, and bleeding church. And, need I say, it has been somewhat a source of weakness for them to be pointed across the water, over and over again, to the lowering of the standard there—*there* in the van of our noble army—that army upon whose faithfulness, beyond all question, the destiny of the world, as respects light and liberty for ages to come, seems to depend. Most of us believe it is a false alarm; and we wish not only to strengthen the hands of our evangelists by a true report, but to remove, as far as statement of facts shall enable us, the stigma cast upon our American brethren. To none could the brethren appeal with so much propriety as to yourself. They know that the history of the Reformation is mapped out before you as a succession of events, in every one of which you have borne a leading part. They know that to maintain unsullied the honour of the Christian name, as associated with the progress of that history, you would not account your own life dear to yourself. And they know also, that any statement you may have to make on the subject now submitted, will be received by themselves with unquestioning confidence, and by all interested as definitely setting the matter at rest. On these grounds, yet chiefly as it refers to evangelistic labour in this country, it is my duty to urge the resolution upon your kind and courteous attention, and to solicit for it that amount of consideration which its importance demands.

“On behalf of the churches in Great Britain and Ireland, I await the favour of a reply, and remain, dear and honoured brother, yours in the glorious hope of immortality,

“GILBERT Y. TICKLE.”

When the letter reached Mr. Campbell's home he was absent, and, consequently, it was not answered until June of the following year. As most of Mr. Campbell's letter refers to other matters, it is only needful to quote what he says on the communion question. This is as follows :—

“I can say, so far as my knowledge extends, we have no such custom. In all my travels abroad, I have not witnessed such an occurrence. That unbaptized persons may have sat down to the Lord's table amongst our brotherhood without invitation, is not wholly improbable ; but I know of no church that has formally invited them to participate with it on such occasions.

“We do not, indeed, on any such occasions, known to me, ‘*invite*’ or ‘*debar*,’ in the usual currency of these words, anyone unbaptized to participate with us in any act of social worship. Communion, indeed, is not confined to any one ordinance ;—Lord's Day, Lord's Supper, prayer, or praise. We can preach *to* all men, and pray *for* all men, whether they pray or do not with us, but we cannot praise or commune *for* all men in any act of social worship. Such have been my convictions time out of mind. All men have not faith, nor repentance, nor devotion of heart ; and, therefore, all such are evidently of the world and not of the church, nor within the pale of Christian communion.

“We are commanded ‘to offer up supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all men—for kings and all who are in authority,’ or ‘in eminent places,’ that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good

and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, 'Who would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge' or to the acknowledgment 'of the truth.' But this is very far from communing *with* all men in the social and positive ordinances of Christ's own kingdom."

It will be seen from this extract from Mr. Campbell's letter that he fully endorses the statements which have already been made concerning the practice of the churches of America on the Communion question. It will be seen, furthermore, that he does not in the slightest degree modify his statement in the Campbell and Rice Debate, which statement was published in this country some considerable time before Mr. Campbell's visit here. Now it must be evident to the most casual reader that the emphasis which is given to the Communion question in Mr. Tickle's letter can only be explained on the hypothesis that this question had become more and more a matter of importance with Mr. Tickle and his brethren, for it can scarcely be imagined that there could have been much feeling on the subject during the time Mr. Campbell was in this country, since his reception was everywhere hearty, his expenses paid, and contributions freely made to the support of his college in America, notwithstanding his views were generally known. In other words, it is absolutely certain that the brethren in this country had begun to change somewhat to much more exclusive views than they were at first disposed to advocate. At any rate, it is true that some of their leading men were at

this time seeking to make the Communion question a matter of supreme importance.

From the first Mr. Coop seriously doubted the wisdom of this tendency. He had always been regarded by his neighbours as extremely narrow, but he had no disposition to quarrel with others about a question which he did not regard as positively settled in the Word of God. He felt sure about the conditions of the gospel, and hence had no doubt about the terms of entrance into Christ's kingdom, and, consequently, he had always felt the necessity of teaching all the conditions of the gospel in order to either membership in the churches or communion at the Lord's table. Nevertheless, as the last was an act over which he could have no control except by teaching, about this time he began to feel more and more that his duty was discharged when he had faithfully stated the teaching of the Word of God. Beyond this he was not inclined to go, and, therefore, when his brethren began to exercise what he considered as a sort of police guardianship over the Lord's Supper, rigorously excluding pious Pedobaptists, who elected even on their own responsibility to stop at we communion service, Mr. Coop hesitated. At first he was not quite prepared to say that the course of his brethren was wrong, but he was doubtful about taking that course himself. However, as there was not very much said about the matter for a few years after this, Mr. Coop continued to work heartily with his brethren, maintaining the practice at the Lord's table which he had adopted



from the beginning of his association with them, and was in 1861 elected treasurer of the Evangelist Fund.

Reference has already been made to a Mrs. Crook, the widow of one of the pastors of the Baptist Church in Wigan. She was a noble woman, and was regarded by those who knew her as one of the very best and most benevolent women of the town. When her husband died she had the care of seven children, and in order to support them she took a small shop, where, with great care and industry, she not only provided for her family, but had a little surplus, which she always freely contributed toward the cause of Christ.

One day she sent for Mr. Coop, and stated to him that she wished two rooms that were joined made into one, so that it would be suitable for a mission-room. While talking to him she put into his hands a £10 note, and said that if it cost more than that sum he must pay the balance. But Mr. Coop, forgetting what the value of the paper was which she had placed in his hands, began to roll it about, and finally tore it up, and afterwards threw the pieces away. Of course this was a severe lesson to Mr. Coop, as the £10 were greatly needed. Nevertheless, he was not deterred by his own foolish act, but went on at once to prepare the room at his own expense, according to the instructions of the good woman, who had contributed so liberally toward the work, but whose contribution was destroyed in such a curious manner.

This mission-hall, which would comfortably seat eighty or ninety persons, was situated in Wigan Lane, and was formally opened on Lord's Day, April 21st, 1860. On the following day about eighty met and took tea, after which a public meeting was held and addresses were given by Mr. Coop, Mr. McDougall, and several others, among whom were some of the recent converts.

This room soon became a centre of great spiritual activity. Crowded meetings were held, and the success in making conversions was almost phenomenal. The following very interesting account of the mission, written by J. Collin, is worth reprinting from the *Harbinger* :—

“ From the first the audience was composed of men and women of the lowest class—men whose labour was expended in the bowels of the earth, with minds as dark as the coal-mine in which they worked, and lives as begrimed with sin as were their persons with the filth consequent on their occupation. The majority of the women were the wives of these men. Altogether a group of poor sinners stepped aside out of their ordinary course into a position somewhat new to them, for seldom did *their* ears listen to sounds such as were breathed upon them by the preacher ; yet, even in their ignorance and deep degradation, God had not left Himself without a witness ; for in the depths of their being lay—it may be dormant, yet no less real—a principle of life that only needed the touch of kindred flame—life to life—to make it burst into activity. And so it was, that as the preacher in earnest solicitude addressed himself as ‘ a dying man to dying men ’—as he told of the love of Him who gave His beloved Son, and the love of Him who died, that indifference gave place to curiosity, curi-

osity to lively interest, until all eyes were riveted, and all ears intent. The meetings were continued, and the next Monday evening found the people again in a listening posture; and the next, and the next; the number of the audience increasing weekly, until the feeling aroused in the neighbourhood became very manifest by a room filled to excess. Besides preaching in the room, our brother sought opportunities of conversing with them at their homes, and found, without exception, a hearty welcome. This was a valuable auxiliary, inasmuch as it made him thoroughly acquainted with the characters, and, consequently, with the wants of those with whom he had to do; and very soon he found that the seed sown was beginning to germinate, at least in the hearts of *some* of the hearers—their faces seemed ‘Zionwards.’ This suggested the desirability of another meeting devoted to enquirers; it was accordingly intimated that Friday evening would be spent in this way. When the night and the hour had arrived, there were about ten persons in waiting, whose earnest enquiry after truth could not be doubted. The plan adopted was, after opening the meeting, to announce it perfectly free to any who had an enquiry, or a difficulty, or any matter on their mind in which they felt need of help; and the honest souls were not slow to take advantage of the privilege, for some who could read had been led to examine the Scriptures at home, and noted their difficulties, in order to present them for solution. This meeting has proved very useful, and altogether successful, as may be judged by the fact that from ten it has increased to an average attendance of thirty persons, who feel and exercise the greatest liberty in their search after the meaning of Scripture. The result of all this has been that a number of the most careless, and some of the most vile of sinners, have been led to confess the name of Christ, become united to Him in baptism, and are living in the enjoyment of Him, not being ashamed to own His name where they once blasphemed it.”

At first Mrs. Crook did not unite with the brethren. She continued to hold her membership in the Baptist Church, but was, nevertheless, greatly interested in Mr. Coop and his friends. However, it was not very long before she began to waver in her loyalty to the denomination with which she was associated. She was especially persuaded that Mr. Coop and his friends were right in attending to the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day.

In 1852 Elihu Burritt visited Liverpool, with a view to creating interest in the peace movement. He was received rather coolly in Liverpool, not much attention being given to his mission ; but hearing of Mr. Coop as a zealous reformer, he came to Wigan to see him. Mr. Coop was at once deeply interested in Burritt's mission, and, accordingly, used his influence to form a committee of ladies to work in the cause of peace. This committee met from time to time in Mr. Coop's parlour, Mrs. Coop being the first president. As Mrs. Crook was a member of this committee, she was frequently thrown into company with both Mr. McDougall and Mr. Coop ; consequently, under their joint instruction she was led to a fuller appreciation of their religious position, and after having failed in an earnest effort to have her own church take such reformatory steps as she deemed necessary, and through great conflict of mind, she determined to separate herself from the Baptists, with whom she had been associated forty-four years, and among whom her husband had been a minister, and cast in her lot with the Church

in Rodney Street in their effort to restore primitive Christianity.

In 1861 the Annual Meeting was held at Leicester, presided over by Mr. J. K. Tener of Ireland. The number of churches on the list was eighty-eight, reporting sixty-nine, and number of members 2,528. An incident took place at this meeting which is of considerable importance in view of the subsequent controversy on the Communion question. It appears that Henry S. Earl, M.A., a native Englishman, though for a number of years a resident of the United States, and a graduate of Bethany College, was in attendance at the meeting. This gentleman delivered an address before the meeting on "faith as the confidence as to things hoped for, the conviction as to things not seen." This address was received very heartily, and Mr. Earl himself was cordially greeted by the attending members. Among the resolutions passed was the following:—

"That letters from Elder A. Campbell, of the church at Bethany, from elders of the church at Waverley, and from Brothers Milligan and Richardson, at the Kentucky University, America, all most heartily commending to the love and fellowship of the brethren in Great Britain, Brother Henry S. Earl, a graduate of Bethany College, and for some years an earnest and faithful evangelist of the gospel of Jesus—this meeting most gladly welcomes him to his native country, and recommends the churches to make use of his services as openings require and means allow."

Now as Mr. Earl came from the United States fully

endorsing the practice of the churches of that country, and was commended by the leading men in the movement there, it is difficult to understand how he could have been received and recommended to the churches as he was, after all that had been published on the Communion question in this country, if *at that time* the churches were prepared to support only such evangelists as would carry out the extreme views of some of the brethren on the Communion question.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Earl did labour very successfully in many places, and that, too, with financial help from the Evangelist Committee, and also with their hearty commendations, as is abundantly shown from the report of the Evangelist Committee at the Annual Meeting (1862) held at Liverpool. This committee speak of Mr. Earl and his work as follows :—

“ We have heard with high pleasure of the success which has attended the labours of Brother H. S. Earl, at Leicester, Dungannon in Ireland, Banbury, and London, and the acceptableness of his work elsewhere ; and though not labouring directly under the care of your committee, we could not help feeling that, as the Annual Meeting recommended him as a worthy labourer to the churches, we were on this account, as well as on the admitted principle of aiding those who are acknowledged by a competent number of churches as efficient labourers, bound, as far as in us lay, to see that at least our brother was at no loss. To this also, we have been enabled to attend.”

Mr. Earl attended this meeting and delivered one of the addresses. The meeting was also addressed by Mr.

Henry Exley, a gentleman who will subsequently be referred to frequently.

At the Annual Meeting in 1863, at Huddersfield, Mr. Coop presided. The report of the Evangelist Fund refers to the employment of Mr. Henry Exley for two months, and he is mentioned as "an efficient, wise, and fervent labourer." The committee furthermore say :—

"We cannot say *now* that our *greatest* need is qualified preachers. Brother Earl and Brother Exley, both of them well accredited as such, are, we presume, ready to devote themselves to this work, and in thus calling your attention to these brethren we thus transfer to the proper quarter a question which has been often proposed to the secretary during the past year: 'Will the committee engage Brothers Earl and Exley for the coming year?' Our reply, the only one that became us, has ever been, 'We are not the committee for the coming year. Had we means in hand or in sight we would gladly engage them both *this year*.'"

Both Mr. Earl and Mr. Exley continued to labour with great acceptance to the churches during the next year. In May 1864 Mr. Earl sailed for Australia, and continued for several years in that country, while Mr. Exley remained in the service of the Evangelist Committee, preaching at a number of places during the year 1863-4, and reporting in all about sixty additions through his labours.

At the Annual Meeting in 1864, held in Wigan, the following resolution was passed :—

“Resolved, that the thanks of this meeting be transmitted to Brother James Challen, of Philadelphia, for his very appropriate appeal to the American Christian Missionary Society (inserted in the *American Christian Review* of June 1864) in behalf of the brethren of this country, seeing the urgent need which exists for the labours of able and faithful proclaimers of the ancient gospel.”

It will be seen by this action that not only were American evangelists acceptable to the churches, as in the case of Messrs. Earl and Exley, but it will be seen also that the churches, represented in their Annual Meeting, formally thanked Mr. James Challen of Philadelphia for appealing to the American Christian Missionary Society for evangelists to labour in this country. Not a word is said about right views on the Communion question as an essential qualification of these American evangelists to work under the auspices of the Evangelist Committee. However, reference to a further development of the Communion question must be deferred for a later date.

Having now traced the religious movement in which Mr. Coop was engaged up to the year 1865, it will be necessary to return to other matters with which he was associated. And in order that the real condition of the country, from a business point of view, may be clearly placed before the reader, it is thought best to give a short sketch of the Lancashire cotton famine, which marks not only an important event in the times of Mr.



Coop, but also goes far to illustrate the pluck, endurance, and resources of the Lancashire character.

In the year 1860 Lancashire was in a state of unparalleled prosperity. One tenth of the amount raised by the property tax in England was contributed by this county. About thirty-three millions of spindles were at work here in the production of cotton, 4,431,281,728 yards of cotton cloth being woven during the year. 192,332 males and 233,789 females were employed in the textile industry in Lancashire, of whom no less than 383,674 were employed in the manufacture of flax and cotton goods, and were in the receipt of higher wages than at any preceding date.

When news of the outbreak of the American civil war first came, a large number of those who received eighty-five per cent. of their raw material from the United States refused to credit it. And even when it could no longer be doubted, the traders kept on hoping that the Southerners would continue selling and exporting their cotton. Towards the end of the year 1861, however, they received the terrible intelligence that the Federals had declared the blockade of the Southern ports. In October the mills began to run short. Many became alarmed. Speculators held cotton for a rise. And very soon distress began to make itself generally felt. About nineteen per cent. of the population of Wigan were dependent upon the cotton manufacture. A similar proportion derived their income from the collieries. It often

happened that the males worked in the pits and the females in the mills. But so large a proportion of the products of the Wigan collieries was consumed in the cotton manufacture, and by its numerous dependents, that when the cotton trade became disorganised a very large number of collieries were thrown out of work. In December 1861 the applicants for outdoor relief at Wigan numbered fifteen per cent. more than in "the panic year," 1857.

Wigan is said to have been the first place in which a relief committee was organised. On January 2nd, 1862, a public meeting was held in the Moot Hall to establish a Distressed Operatives' Relief Fund, £3,800 being raised in connection with this first effort.

In May, from 9,000 to 10,000 persons were dependent upon the Relief Committee, whose work was done very systematically. Mr. Coop served on this committee. A sub-committee sat in each ward of the town. Applicants for relief were supplied, not with money, but with orders on various shopkeepers, from whom they received such goods as they required. The shopkeepers obtained their cash from the central committee. The weekly expenditure of this committee at this time amounted to about £250.

In July no less than 7,358 cotton operatives applied for relief in Wigan. If this number be multiplied by the average number of persons dependent for their support upon each such toiler, an idea can be formed of the widespread extent of the distress.

The thrilling letters of "A Lancashire Lad," which appeared in the *Times* at intervals during that year, bring us face to face with the deep distress which prevailed in so many parts of the county. "We," he wrote, "have fathers sitting in the house at midday silent and glum, while children look wistfully about, and sometimes whimper for bread which they cannot have. Our factory women and girls have to turn out, and, plodding a weary day from door to door, beg a bit of bread, or a stray copper, that may eke out the scanty supply at home. . . . I look with a strange feeling upon the half-famished creatures I see hourly about me. I cannot pass through a street but I see evidences of deep distress. I cannot sit at home half-an-hour without having one or more coming to ask for bread to eat." And he describes some of those whom he visited. One, a poor woman stricken with fever, "sat on an orange-box before a low fire, and to prevent the fire from going out she was pulling her seat to pieces bit by bit. . . . A small heap of straw in the corner served as a bed for the woman's four children."

Some of the narratives which have been recorded by various eye-witnesses enable us to realise the intensity of the people's sufferings more vividly than we could without their aid.

In a family of ten persons there were four under ten years of age. Five of the members of the family were capable of working. When all were in regular employment the joint income amounted to £3 5s. a week. When

the visitor called to see them he found that the wife had long been ill, that the doctor's bills could not be paid, and that for nine weeks the family of ten had been dependent upon five shillings a week.

A visitor found an Irish family in one of the low parts of Wigan, consisting of seven persons, one of whom, a lad, had been ill for months. His mother said she had thought, as she put it, of getting "a ricommind to see would the doctor give him anythin' to rise an appetite in him at all. By the same token," she said, "I know it's not a convanient time for makin' appetite in poor folk just now. . . . Faith!" she added, "my hands is full wid one thing an' another! Ah thin! but God is good after all! we dunno know what is He goin' to do, though the dark cloud is upon us this day."

Some striking illustrations are given of the *independence* of the Lancashire character which made it so difficult to administer charity. In one of the towns, as we learn from the special correspondent of the *Manchester Examiner*, "A clean old decrepit man presented himself at the board. 'What's brought you here, Joseph?' asked the chairman. 'Why aw've (I've) nought to do nor nought to tak' to.' 'What's your daughter Ellen doing?' 'Hoo's eawt o' wark' (She's out of work). 'And what's your wife doing?' 'Hoo's bin bedfast (bedridden) aboon (above) five year.' A ticket of relief being given, the man looked at it, and turned round saying, 'Couldn't yo let me be a sweeper i' th' streets i'stid' (instead)?'

"A visitor called on a family for which no application for relief had been made. Some of the neighbours said they were 'ill off.' The visitor, finding them perishing from want, offered some relief tickets, but the poor woman began to cry, and said, 'Eh! aw (I) dar' not touch 'em; my husban' would sauce me so! Aw dar not tak' 'em; aw should never yer th' last on't.'"

Another story shows how some of the unemployed longed for the American quarrel to end so that they might get to work again. A hardy brown-faced man, who had been out of work for nine months, was complaining bitterly of having nothing to do. "It would," he said, "sicken a dog for sure. I wish," he added, "yon chaps in Amerikay would play th' upstroke, an' get done wi' their bother, so as folk would start o' wortchin' again."

Many of the unemployed began to go in bodies singing through the streets of the large towns. Sometimes the men were supplied with musical instruments and the women with hymn-books. They sang many well-known tunes, such as "Burton," "French," "Luther's Hymn," and the "Old Hundredth." Some, however, showed a preference for Leech's minor tunes.

It was a touching sight to see the poor helping their poorer brethren and sisters. One morning at half-past five a woman came to a shed where coffee was being distributed. She had, at that early hour, walked four miles to get it. But she could get nothing to eat. A

poor fellow who was breakfasting in the shed gave her a thick slice of his bread as she went away.

At the end of November 1862 the total number of persons in Lancashire who were chargeable on the rates was 458,441. To prevent the unemployed from growing desperate, elementary schools were opened for their benefit, and they were set to teach each other under superintendence. In March 1863 no less than 135,625 persons attended these schools.

Three excellent rooms were opened in Wigan, in which the young women who had been thrown out of work were taught to read and write, to sew and knit.

The employment of these girls in sewing gave Mr. Coop the idea that females might be engaged in the manufacture of men's clothing, and that they might make use of sewing-machines for this purpose.

This cotton famine had a very serious effect on Mrs. Coop. She had not been very strong for some years, and her zeal for good works often prompted her to undertake much more than she was really able to accomplish. As already intimated, the suffering during the famine was very great, and schools were provided for teaching the factory girls. Mrs. Coop was one of the teachers, and attended every day at this hard service. This continued trying work, added to the care of her family, told upon her health, and it was not long until it became seriously impaired. Speaking of the result of these schools Mr. Coop says:—

"There were hundreds, if not thousands, of girls who had learned to read, write, sew, etc., during the time of famine, who never had any idea of such things before. But this taste of education, without education itself, seemed to spoil some of them, and when they got married they made poor shiftless wives. Some of them became very much attached to my wife during the time she was teaching them. They sought her aid in trying to keep themselves from going back into the factory after the famine was over. They wished to make a living in some other way. In providing for these girls my wife had an additional burden upon her.

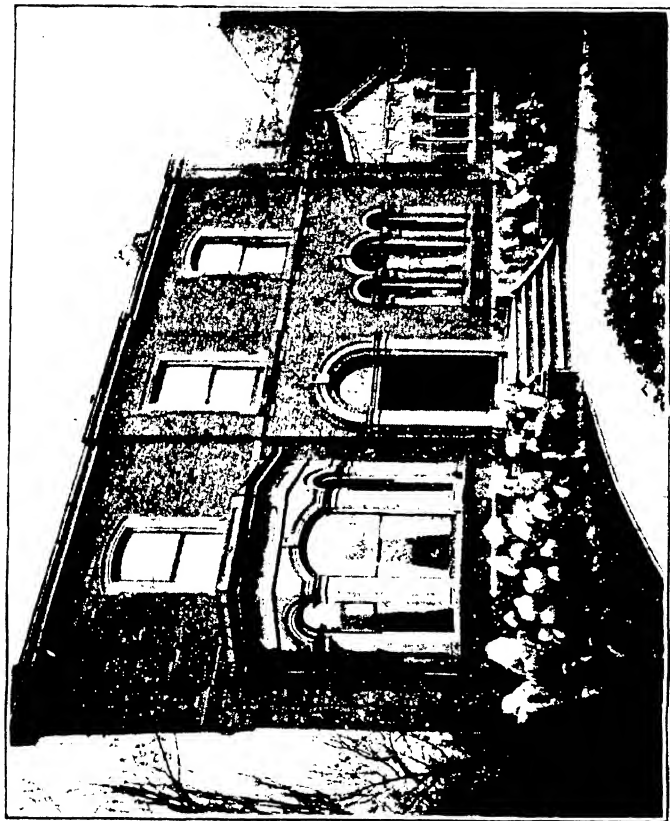
"Some time before this I bought a sewing-machine, giving £36 15s. for it. I myself learned to sew with it, and then began to teach others. After I had learned to work the machine well, to take it to pieces and put it right again, I bought several others, and gradually began to use them in the business. I then taught some of the factory girls how to use them. In a little time I had a number of machines at work, and, as a consequence, we soon got 'stitched up.' Our stock of ready-made clothes began to increase so rapidly that we made more than we could sell, and, therefore, had to store them away in all the spare places we could find. The question now was, What shall we do? Must we give up and send the girls home, or what? James Marsden, who was nearing the close of his apprenticeship, said, 'I should like to take a few samples and go to the Potteries, and see what can be done in the way of a wholesale trade.' I consented, and he packed as many as he could conveniently carry and started off on his first journey. He came back in two days, and had sold all the samples he took with him, besides taking orders for some dozens of suits."

In 1861 Mr. Coop had purchased the lot on which the present retail shop stands, and which was the site of

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BETHANY HOUSE (MR. COOP'S RESIDENCE AT SOUTHPORT).

the "Bay Horse" public-house. This purchase caused Mr. Coop considerable trouble. The lot cost him £1,900. Though the building standing on it was not worth £100, there was a licence attached to this public-house which was estimated to be worth £500, but Mr. Coop refused to transfer it to anyone else, preferring to lose the £500, if he could thereby decrease the number of public-houses by one. After considerable difficulty with the district surveyor the premises were ready for occupancy, and were entered into on January 1st, 1862.

In the spring of 1863, his wife's health being very critical, Mr. Coop decided to remove to Southport with his family, which consisted of his wife, his daughter Lois, and two sons, Joe and Frank, respectively aged seven and four years.

Mr. Coop found only one family in Southport who were religiously in sympathy with him. But this was quite enough with which to begin active operations. The Temperance Hall was the first place taken, and then the services of Evangelist Exley were secured, to deliver a series of discourses. These labours were followed by the labours of other persons, viz., McDougall, Davis, Collins, and Hay, of Wigan; Jones and Mackensie, of St. Helens; Tickle, of Liverpool; and Moffatt, of Newcastle; also King and Evans. The result was the association of fourteen persons in fellowship. One of this little company was George Sinclair, to whom reference has already been made as one of the three

brethren associated with Mr. Coop in founding the church at Wigan, and also as the first evangelist for the Wigan district.

Mr. Coop himself began at once to preach on the sands near the promenade, where he generally secured a good hearing. But it soon became evident that a house was necessary, and after going from the Temperance Hall to a room at the corner of Lord Street and London Street, and then to two fishermen's cottages, where they knocked the partition down and made one large room, which was used for meetings on the Lord's Day and also as a day-school during the week, they finally built a room in Sussex Road, which answered their purpose very well for a few years.

On June 14th, 1864, Mr. James Marsden, to whom reference has already been made, was married to Mr. Coop's daughter Lois. Mr. Marsden was an active member of the church at Rodney Street, and had already shown much tact and energy as a business man ; consequently this union gave Mr. Coop much pleasure, and, as the business was rapidly growing, Mr. Coop began to see the prospect of a large income ; but he saw also that his own responsibilities were greatly increased.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LIBERALISING INFLUENCES.

**I**N 1865 the civil war in America was brought to a close, and on April 14th President Lincoln was assassinated. In this country, and especially in Lancashire, there had been considerable sympathy manifested with the Confederates during the entire struggle. This was partly owing to the fact of the cotton interests involved. But there were many noble exceptions to those who simply took a selfish view of the matter, and Mr. Coop was one of these. He never hesitated to express his sympathy with the American Union, though he had no occasion to become actively aggressive in making his views known. However, he was always on the side of liberty, and consequently could not believe in American slavery ; and as it was evident that this was involved in the struggle, he, for that reason, as well as others, greatly rejoiced when the struggle ended in favour of the Union.

During this same year (April 2nd), Richard Cobden died. He had been one of Mr. Coop's political instructors. It is well known that to him more than to anyone else the people of this country are indebted for the abolition of the Corn Laws, and it was during his struggle with

the Duke of Wellington in regard to these laws that Mr. Coop began to form definitely some of his political opinions. Undoubtedly Mr. Cobden's influence had much to do in shaping these. Cobden was a man of the people. Being largely self-educated, and a business man, he was in many respects the counterpart of Mr. Coop himself. Cobden was the founder of what was known as the Manchester school of politicians, and this school had a large influence in developing the Liberal party of the present day. Two other men died in 1867 who were highly esteemed by Mr. Coop. These were Mr. William Turner and Mr. James Wallis. The first died on March 15th, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the last on May 17th, in the seventy-third year of his age.

Mr. Turner was highly esteemed among all the churches. He was for several years before Mr. Coop was baptized a Wesleyan local preacher. They were warm friends, and when Mr. Turner heard of Mr. Coop's baptism he came over from Leigh, where he lived, to Wigan for the express purpose of remonstrating with his friend against the course he had taken. When he met Mr. Coop he expressed the greatest grief at his conduct, and did not hesitate to intimate that he regarded his course as involving the peril of his soul. However, his high regard for Mr. Coop was such that he was willing to hear what he had to say. They opened their Bibles, and after examining many passages of Scripture they prayed together, and then Mr. Turner left. But he had received

more than he had anticipated. He visited his friend frequently, and Mr. Coop constantly appealing to the Scriptures, Mr. Turner at last could hold out no longer, and finally was himself baptized. He had an appointment to preach in the Wesleyan Chapel, Leigh, the Sunday following his baptism ; but the travelling preacher, having heard of what had happened, would not allow him to preach. He was afterwards actively engaged in propagating the principles contended for by Mr. Coop and his friends, and at the Annual Meeting in the year of his death the following resolution was heartily passed :—

“That this meeting desires to record its deep sense of the loss sustained in the death of our late esteemed Brother W. Turner, and hereby expresses its sympathy with his widow and her family in their affliction ; and hopes that the memory of his example as a Christian may stir up the brethren to greater devotion in the Lord’s vineyard.”

The death of Mr. James Wallis was felt by Mr. Coop very keenly. They had first met in 1845. Mr. Wallis was then editor and publisher of the *Christian Messenger*. They immediately became steadfast friends, and this friendship grew stronger and stronger till the very last. In speaking of Mr. Wallis Mr. Coop himself says :—

“He treated me like a father, and often came over to Wigan to see me and to preach for us. On one occasion he brought his son-in-law Mr. John Frost, who was actively interested in our religious work. We had a very delightful season. I always called to see him when going to or returning from London. Our

close friendship continued to grow year by year. We were in the same trade, only at first he had a much larger business than ours, but we subsequently extended ours more into the wholesale trade. Our views and feelings were very much alike. He often spoke to me about giving up the editorship of the *Harbinger*, and did not know what to do with it. A little time before he gave it up, David King was associated with him in the editorship, and of course Brother Wallis expected that Brother King would probably be his successor. But he had his misgivings about the propriety of this, and he (Wallis) very much feared to trust the *Harbinger* in his hands. However, his continued failing health finally compelled him, at the close of the volume for 1861, to give up the editorship and transfer the magazine to the hands of Brother King. But it would appear that at least some of his fears were realised in the subsequent management. Mr. Wallis's first volume in 1848 contained five hundred and eighty pages, and his last in 1861, six hundred and twenty-eight pages; while the first volume of King, in 1862, contained four hundred and thirty-two pages, a drop of nearly two hundred pages; and only eight years after there was a drop of another hundred, although the membership of the churches had increased from two thousand five hundred and twenty-eight in 1861 to four thousand and forty in 1869."

Mr. Wallis was a man of gentle spirit, commanding talent, and of unimpeachable character. He was among the first who pleaded for the movement with which he was associated, and he, more than any other man, contributed towards restraining the movement from many extremes to which it was constantly tending. He heartily sympathised with Mr. Coop in his earnest wishes to secure the active services of able men in the general field, and he had no sympathy whatever

with making restricted views on the Communion question a test of the qualifications of evangelists. The year before his death a resolution was passed by the Annual Meeting, held at Nottingham, in which this test was first formally endorsed. The resolution was as follows :—

“Resolved—That we learn with deep regret that some evangelists in America commune at the Lord’s Table with unbaptized persons, who, without formal invitation, and, as it is alleged, on their own responsibility, partake ; we hereby decline to sanction evangelistic co-operation with any brother, whether from America or elsewhere, who knowingly communes with unbaptized persons, or who in any way advocates such communion.”

There is evidence that Mr. Wallis seriously doubted the wisdom of this resolution. But its passage had been secured by the active support of men who were now rapidly taking the place of the old pioneers ; and although he grieved over the spirit which was in the resolution, he fondly hoped that it would be practically null in its operation. He himself at this time was too feeble to take any very active part in either the councils or the work of the brethren, and, consequently, what had been his potential influence before this time was now practically lost, or else it is probable that no such resolution would have been passed.

As proof that these conclusions are correct, the following letter, written to Mr. Earl during the very year Mr. King began his editorship of the *Harbinger*, is quite sufficient :—



“NOTTINGHAM, *April 11th*, 1862.

“DEAR BROTHER EARL,—I am still forbidden to do much mental work. This to me is a great task to learn. Neither to *read*, *write*, nor *speak* in *public* is impossible for one who understands what the liberty of the Gospel is. But I want you to see Brother Campbell’s *Harbinger* for March, and by this post have sent you the loan of it. Brother Errett has made out the best case a man can do. If he is wrong, I hope he will be forgiven. I have certainly been one with him for some years, and am still, yet I am not a Mixed Communion man in the popular sense of the term, and am sorry the discussion was ever raised amongst us. But so it is, and the consequences must be left. Some of our best ‘*Songs of Praise*’ were composed by men and women not baptized by immersion, and our would-be rigid and strict brethren sing them without hesitation, and with *joy of heart*. Yet should the authors come into the assembly they might expect to be reproved if attempting to sing even their own Christian songs, because they have not been baptized into Jesus. I am quite sure that I have quite as much to bear and forbear with them as they have with me.

“From yours in truth and love,  
“J. WALLIS.”

And to show that the foregoing statements do not over-estimate Mr. Wallis’s character and influence, it may be well to quote from a sermon, delivered June 2nd, 1867, on his life and death by Mr. David King, his successor in the editorship of the *Harbinger*. He says :—

“In our recently removed brother we have had not a merely devoted Christian, but one who, in the providence of God, has been

enabled, directly or indirectly, to promote a return to the faith, order, and discipline of the Church of Christ to a larger extent than any other, living or dead, whose name has been enrolled with those in this country who during the last twenty-five years have pleaded a return in all things to the good laws and right statutes of the Apostolic Church."

As Mr. Wallis occupied such a prominent position in shaping the religious movement in which Mr. Coop was engaged, it is perhaps well to give the following further quotation from this sermon, notwithstanding there is some repetition of matters already discussed, as it sets forth some of the important facts connected with Mr. Wallis's life :—

"He was born at Kettering in 1793. He served an apprenticeship to a tailor, and in 1812 was immersed and became a member of a Baptist church. Two years later he left the place of his abode and church connection to avoid serving as a soldier. His worldly treasure was not burdensome during his walk to Leicester, where he obtained employment, and took membership under the pastorate of the noted Robert Hall. After about two years he went to Nottingham, and united with the Baptist church in George Street. There he became somewhat active in surrounding villages in making known the truth he had found so precious to his own soul. But having a mind to learn as well as to teach, he found the church wanting in conformity to New Testament usage, and, with several others, left to unite with the Scotch Baptists, considering that by so doing he would approach much nearer to the ancient way. There, as a student of the Word, he advanced beyond the bulk of his brethren, and found that by changing his position he had not entirely escaped conflict.

But here let us step back for a short time. While James Wallis

was learning his trade, a mighty movement was commencing on the other side of the Atlantic. Thomas Campbell had migrated to the United States in 1807. Two years later he was joined by his son, Alexander, and that year they published a declaration of principles which have been most powerfully and effectually advocated, so that now some 400,000 or 500,000 Disciples in America alone plead for the union of all believers on the one and only foundation, and for a return to Christianity as it was at the first. Coming back to our own shores, we find that in 1835 William Jones, M.A., a Scotch Baptist leader of considerable note, commenced the monthly publication of *The Millennial Harbinger and Voluntary Church Advocate*. The prefatory remarks were taken from the preface to Alexander Campbell's *Millennial Harbinger*, and the first number indicated that he had discovered that a vast reformation, advocated by Alexander Campbell and others, whose pleadings it was his intention largely to reproduce, was progressing in America. Elder Jones, however, mistook this reformation for a Scotch Baptist movement, higher than which he never aimed. In his first number he published a letter from Alexander Campbell to a brother then upon a visit to this country. He wrote: 'From the best information I can gather there are about 150,000 brethren in the reformation in the United States. Since you left us last year there have not been less than 10,000 immersed in the United States and Canada. We only want 1,000 evangelists more to make the cause triumphant in America. About two hundred congregations of the *Christian Body*, as they called themselves, in Kentucky and Ohio, have united with the Disciples.' The second volume of Elder Jones's *Harbinger* closed with an intimation that literary duties compelled its suspension for a few months, after which it would be resumed. Upon the last page the editor remarks: 'As a preacher we have heard that Mr. Campbell is as eloquent as Robert Hall, and as a writer he stands unrivalled. The breath of calumny and detraction has

never dared to blow upon his moral character—but then he is a reformer, and this ruins all.’ Elder Jones never resumed the *Millennial Harbinger*. He found that the reformers, whom he had lauded to the heavens, paid no respect to Scotch Baptist theology, and bowed not down before its idols. It was also clear that his reprints of Mr. Campbell’s articles had shaken the opinions of many of his readers, and that they were likely to move out of the ruts of his system. England, then, must have no more from the pen of Alexander Campbell. But those who had received much *would* have more, and if he would not supply it the Lord could find other servants.

“March 1837 saw the first issue, by James Wallis of Nottingham, of the *Christian Messenger and Reformer*, a monthly periodical, designed to take the place of the *Millennial Harbinger*, and to reproduce the more important of Mr. Campbell’s articles. Under this title it appeared, until, owing to the existence of a Church of England periodical of the same name, it was changed to *The British Millennial Harbinger*, which Mr. Wallis issued till the close of 1861, when owing to his growing infirmities it was transferred to other hands. But for his opportune labour in supplying a periodical when William Jones retired from the work, thousands would have been left without the valuable help thus afforded, and the few then devoted to the whole truth would have been destitute of means of regular communication.

“The union of James Wallis with the Scotch Baptists took place in 1834. Soon after that union he and others became constant readers of the *Millennial Harbinger*, which in the Scotch Baptist interest came to them from William Jones, and for a time the Scotch Baptist church in Nottingham was engaged in a controversy, which ended in the majority deciding that they could not fellowship with those who affirm faith, repentance, and baptism necessary to the full enjoyment of salvation. Then, on Lord’s Day, December 18th, 1836, according to custom, the Lord’s

Table was refused to the whole church on account of the non-presence of pastors, whereupon several withdrew, and on the following Lord's Day fourteen met in an upper room, and James Wallis and Jonathan Hine were chosen to preside. Three were added that morning, and in the evening three others gave in their names. On the Lord's Day following nine more were added, and before the close of 1837 the church numbered ninety-seven members, fifty-three of whom had been added by immersion. From this church the truth sounded out, so that within a moderate distance of Nottingham several churches were soon planted. But as in America, so here—this great work was not to expand from one centre only, and hence we find congregations in divers places, following the Bible, step by step, in the same direction, without knowing of the existence of each other."

Mr. James Marsden's marriage with Mr. Coop's daughter, Lois, has already been mentioned. On January 1st, 1866, Mr. Coop took his son-in-law into partnership with him, and as Mr. Marsden had been thoroughly trained in the business, this arrangement added considerable strength to the directing power of the concern, and it also gave Mr. Coop more leisure for religious work, as well as opportunity to travel, which seems to have been a passion with him from about this time. After the formation of the partnership the operations of the firm began to be more extensive than ever before, and it was not long until new premises were regarded as absolutely necessary.

Reference has already been made to a mission-room which Mr. Coop helped to start in Wigan Lane. In

1868, it is stated, in the report of the Wigan church at the Annual Meeting, that after eight years' experience of the influence of the mission referred to it was decided to obtain, if possible, a cottage meeting in every district of the town, and that this, with one exception, had been accomplished. The plan was as far as practicable to place a deacon with each district visitor, and thus to furnish those whose family duties kept them from regular attendance at the chapel with the means of spiritual refreshment at their doors. This plan proved to be of much service to the work in Wigan. Indeed, at this time the church had grown to be of considerable importance, the report being, for this year, twenty-nine baptisms, one hundred and seventy members, twenty-eight Sunday-school teachers, and two hundred scholars.

In the year 1869 Mr. Gladstone's Act for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Irish Church was introduced in Parliament on March 1st, and became law July 26th. Mr. Coop took the liveliest interest in this measure, and, doubtless, the discussion of it had considerable influence upon the further modification of his religious opinions, which had, in some respects, been gradually undergoing a change for a few years; and in this fact we see how a political contest may sometimes have a far-reaching effect in religious matters. Of course the principles of liberty are the same everywhere, whether in politics or religion, and when questions involving political freedom are discussed, precisely the same principles

are involved as if the discussion was about religion. Mr. Coop had no sympathy with Romanism, but he felt that Romanists were entitled to enjoy their own religious opinions, and ought not to be required to pay a tax to support a church of which they could not approve. In other words, Mr. Coop regarded the whole question of religious liberty as largely involved in the Irish Church Disestablishment Act; and it cannot be denied that Mr. Gladstone's powerful appeals on behalf of religious freedom made a deep impression upon Mr. Coop's mind.

It must be remembered that at this time the whole country was deeply agitated on this question, and it is not at all remarkable that men like Mr. Coop should have been driven further either one way or the other. It was next to impossible for them to remain indifferent to the great issues involved. The discussion made every man, who gave the matter much consideration, either more liberal in his views or else more bigoted. Mr. Coop had always had a great deal of sympathy with the oppressed, but he had not been remarkable for manifesting religious tolerance in the case of those whose religious views were antagonistic to his own. The movement with which he was identified had never emphasised very vigorously the doctrines of a true religious freedom, and in this it differed somewhat from the reform movement in America with which the Campbells were identified. But now Mr. Coop had his attention called

to a great question, during the discussion of which he received impressions which largely contributed to the subsequent modification of his religious views on some important questions. Hence it will be seen that Mr. Coop was greatly indebted to Mr. Gladstone for the new religious standpoint which he occupied during the latter part of his life.

But he was even more indebted to an American statesman than to Mr. Gladstone for the practical break with his old religious associates which finally took place. That statesman was the late President James A. Garfield, and the circumstances leading up to his meeting General Garfield are in themselves quite interesting.

As early as 1847 Mr. Coop had a strong desire to visit America. In that year Alexander Campbell was at Wigan preaching in the Commercial Hall, and was entertained several days at Mr Coop's home. During this time Mr. Coop had frequent earnest conversations with Mr. Campbell about the American country, the people, and especially the churches and their practice. He expressed to Mr. Campbell a strong desire to visit America, but Mr. Campbell called his attention to the fact that he could not safely leave the church in Wigan at that time in view of his relations to it.

This settled the question for a number of years. But when year by year the matter of American evangelists was under consideration, Mr. Coop would occasionally return to his old desire to visit the States. This desire



was at last strongly increased by two or three incidents. Reference has already been made to the passage of a resolution regarding the qualifications of evangelists by the Annual Meeting of 1866. Another resolution was passed at the Annual Meeting in 1868, appointing a committee of four, consisting of Messrs. King, Tickle, Linn, and McDougall, to address a series of letters to three leading American publications, "in reference to certain differences between the churches in America and Great Britain."

These letters were never written by the committee appointed for that purpose, but a series of nine letters were written by David King himself, which were printed in one of the American papers referred to, and also in the *British Millennial Harbinger* for 1868 and 1869, of which Mr. King was editor. It is a somewhat singular fact that no one but Mr. King signed these letters, and yet it would have been possible to secure the signature of all the other members of the committee had they endorsed what the letters contained. At the Annual Meeting of 1869 Mr. King made a report concerning the letters, in which he stated that "no action had been taken by the joint committee appointed to communicate to the churches in America, but that some nine letters had been written by him." Certainly no one will dispute that they were written by *him* when the letters are carefully examined. The first page of the first letter contained seventeen instances of the use of the personal pronoun I, eleven of

these being in the first seventeen lines, and a proportionate number in some of the succeeding pages ; and this fact ought to be sufficient to establish both their personality and individuality.

The effect of these letters was anything but helpful to the cause of Christian unity. A number of brethren in this country, as well as in America, severely condemned their spirit, and seriously questioned many of the statements made in them. Mr. Coop had no sympathy with the appointment of the committee in the first place, and he had still less with the letters of Mr. King, whom he styled a "self-appointed writer."

Nevertheless, Mr. Coop determined to visit America and see for himself. He had long cherished the wish to make a visit there, and now there seemed to him to be a pressing necessity for doing so. He would be able to visit the churches, to come in contact with the leading men, have a practical demonstration before his own eyes of what was being accomplished, and also learn with something like certainty just what the practice of the churches was as regarded the points in controversy between the brethren of the two countries. He did not believe that there were any differences of a very vital character. But his practical mind was not willing to trust to mere representations, and consequently he determined to make a personal tour through America, in order that he might settle the question as to the real state of things.

Accordingly, he made his arrangements, and in the

early spring of 1869 (twenty-two years after his conversations with Mr. Campbell), he and his wife sailed for America in the old paddle-wheel steamer, *Scotia*, of the Cunard line. In regard to this visit Mr. Coop writes :—

“I shall never forget the kind welcome we received at New York from the brethren there. Everything possible was done for our comfort, and the cordial Christian feeling which greeted us everywhere greatly affected us. From New York we went to Niagara, Cleveland, Bethany (the home of Alexander Campbell), and Cincinnati; at all of which places we received an almost princely reception. While at Cincinnati, I well remember that Brother Bishop, who was afterwards Governor of the State of Ohio, made us leave the hotel and stop at his home, where we were overpowered with kindness. But this was only a sample of what we received everywhere, for the brethren seemed to vie with each other in extending to us a hearty hospitality.

“That year, during the month of May, the annual meeting of the Ohio Christian Missionary Society was held in the town of Alliance. Myself and wife attended this meeting. I was especially anxious to visit some of the great representative conventions, that I might have a good opportunity to judge of the manner in which these meetings were conducted by the brethren in the States. Brother Isaac Errett was then President of Alliance College, and was living in the town. I well remember taking tea with his family, and spending an afternoon at his house with General Garfield. During our conversations we touched upon several questions, among which may be mentioned the politics of the day and the question of the Alabama claims; and I expressed to him the fear that there would be war between England and America. But he quieted all my fears by telling me that he was quite of the contrary opinion, and gave a number of reasons which seemed to me to be entirely conclusive.

"During the Convention, General Garfield gave one of the grandest addresses I ever heard. It seemed to me that we had got into a new world. His address was characterised by such a comprehensive outlook, such wide-sweeping generalizations, was withal marked by such liberty-loving sentiments and intense political and religious freedom, that he completely settled me on some questions on which I was already a little shaky, and set me to thinking about a good many other matters. I well remember poring over things, and wishing I had never come to America, as I would probably never like my native country again so well as the country in which I now found myself; and yet it appeared impossible for me to leave England. And this impression so entirely possessed me that, on my return to England again, I was looked upon as having been spoiled, while my religious position was ever after this strongly suspected by my extreme brethren."

Undoubtedly this visit of Mr. Coop was practically the turning-point in another forward development of his character. He seemed to have got a new inspiration, and to have thoroughly broken the bonds in which he considered himself to have formerly been bound. He lost none of his interest in the *truth*, but he gained immensely in the *spirit* of the truth. He never wavered in a single respect as regards the fundamental principles of the movement in which he had so long been an active worker, but from this time forward he seemed to settle some questions which had been troubling him for a few years. Indeed, he had never been satisfied with what he regarded as the "do-nothing" policy of the churches in this country. He was himself eminently aggressive, and he had always believed in a very earnest effort to thoroughly evangelise

the whole United Kingdom ; but either because his proposals were not considered practicable, or else for want of sufficient enthusiasm, his strong wishes were not seconded by his brethren, and the result was constant disappointment, and at last extreme mortification. And when he went to America and found that the churches there were enterprising, and that their plea consequently was rapidly taking hold of the whole country, this fact alone increased the mortification which he felt at the comparative failure of the work at home.

While this had a depressing influence upon Mr. Coop's mind, General Garfield's address inspired him with new hopes. He thought now that he saw the way out of the difficulty. He believed that he could return to his native land, and, by offering to contribute liberally to the support of a forward movement, it might be possible to bring the churches up to such enthusiasm as would give good promise of future success. And this feeling was strengthened as he continued his journey through the States. Everywhere he found the cause in a flourishing condition, and he was more and more impressed with the idea that the difference between the success of the American churches and those in his own country was owing not to any important divergence in the *principles* which they respectively advocated, but to the *methods* which they adopted in carrying forward their work.

After having spent several months in the States, in which his wife's health was somewhat recruited, they

returned to their home in Southport. Soon after his return he sent the following letter to Mr. Albert Allen, who was then the financial agent for Bethany College, the college over which Alexander Campbell so long presided.

“WIGAN, ENGLAND,

“November 1869.

“DEAR BROTHER ALLEN,—Enclosed is banker's order for the sum of £150, which, at the rate of three shillings to the dollar, is equivalent to 1,000 dollars of your currency. I send you this to be given to Bethany College, as a token of gratitude for benefits received from reading the works of Alexander Campbell, our late beloved brother and founder of the College, and in remembrance of the Christian courtesy and kindness received by myself and wife during our sojourn in the United States in the summer of this year.

“Praying to the Father of all mercy that a cordial and loving feeling may be increased throughout the Christian brotherhood, both in this country and in America,

“I am, yours truly,

“T. COOP.”

Having now settled down to his work again, and being inspired with new hopes, and having gained considerable knowledge during his absence, which he thought could be made available both in his business and in his religious work, Mr. Coop began what may be regarded as almost a new career among those with whom he had formerly been associated. How his views were received and what became of his efforts in effecting a reformation among his brethren, the sequel will develope.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

IT is interesting to note how it frequently happens that a number of events, coming closely together, tend to develop certain types of character. It has already been seen how the discussion of the Irish Disestablishment Act, and Mr. Coop's visit to America, affected his religious views. But these were not all the influences that were brought to bear upon him. Two events took place in the year 1870, and one in 1871, which greatly helped in broadening and developing Mr. Coop's character. The first of these was the passage of Mr. Forster's Bill for National Education. This Bill created the present Board School system, which has proved to be of the greatest possible importance and value in the education of the people.

This Act at once commanded the deepest sympathy of Mr. Coop. He had always been an earnest friend of the children, and had also been much interested in their education. He now had an opportunity to give practical expression to what had long been with him a deep con-

viction. Feeling that England's future was largely dependent upon the proper education of the masses, he did not hesitate to give his heartiest support to the cause of elementary education. And thus having his attention constantly directed to the welfare of the little ones, he seemed to become more childlike and altogether more liberal towards the faults of those with whom he came in contact. His whole nature seemed to be undergoing a change from the somewhat rigid and combative characteristics for which he had been remarkable, and he now seemed to think mainly of the gentler forms of life, as these were manifested in children. At any rate, about this time he became possessed of the notion that success in religious work, as well as in national development, must begin in the proper training of the children. This notion never left him afterwards, and his great interest in the matter was, if possible, increased when two years later he was elected a member of the School Board.

Another event took place in this same year which made a great impression upon his mind. This was the promulgation by the Vatican Council of the dogma of the Pope's infallibility. This again brought Mr. Gladstone's influence to bear upon him. Mr. Gladstone entered vigorously into the discussion of the Papal dogma, and Mr. Coop read all he had to say. Without perhaps intending it in its widest sense, Mr. Gladstone's review of the Vatican Council's action was a masterly plea for



individual religious liberty ; and after carefully digesting all Mr. Gladstone had to say, Mr. Coop began to get his feet decidedly upon solid ground with respect to the question of religious liberty. He always claimed the right to think, speak, and act for himself, within legitimate bounds ; but he had never been quite able to freely and heartily grant the same liberty to others. Now he was prepared to make both ends of his liberty creed harmonise. Hence, from this time forward he was willing to grant to others whatever he claimed for himself ; and this somewhat new standpoint brought him into sharp antagonism with the notions of a few of the men with whom he was religiously identified. His convictions were further stimulated in the direction indicated by the passage during the next year of the University Test Bill, by which religious tests were abolished.

Up to 1870 Mr. Coop's brethren had had no definite name by which they were designated. They were individually called " Christians," " Brethren," " Disciples of Christ," " Christian Brethren," etc., while their churches were more or less known by the same names. This was found to be somewhat confusing, and especially as they were frequently confounded with other religious bodies. It was, therefore, resolved, at the Annual Meeting of this year, that " the churches throughout the kingdom be recommended to use in all public documents the name Church of Christ, and that individuals designate themselves Christians." The report of membership this year

showed a falling off of fifty-two compared with the previous year.

At the Annual Meeting for the next year the report showed a further drop of 212. Very little of importance was done at this meeting. A report was made by Mr. Coop and other members of the Financial Committee which showed that the whole receipts for the year had been £617 8s. 10d., while the expenditure had been £501 18s. 6d. Mr. Coop further reported his visit to the Annual Meeting of the Welsh churches, and the appeal of that meeting to the General Meeting for aid in supporting for the whole year an evangelist to preach in the Welsh language. Forty pounds were appropriated for this purpose. Among the resolutions passed was one which shows that, up to this time at least, the brethren in America were not considered entirely heterodox. The resolution is as follows :—

“That this meeting desires to record its high appreciation of the presence of Brother and Sister Foote, of New York, its delight in listening to his instructive address, and its sympathy for Brother Carr, of New York, whose presence in much physical weakness is highly appreciated. The meeting also requests Brother Foote to convey to the church in New York its expression of fraternal love and desire to promote New Testament principles.”

It is further stated in the report of the meeting that Mr. Foote delivered an interesting address on 1 Timothy i. 15, and a brief outline of the address is

given. In July, before the general Annual Meeting, meetings were held in Scotland and Wales, at both of which Mr. Coop was chosen to preside, which is conclusive evidence that his liberal tendency had not yet caused his brethren to become generally alienated from him.

However, we are now approaching the time when the issue became more definitely defined. At the Annual Meeting of 1872 the resolution which was passed at Nottingham in 1866, and to which reference has already been made, was for the first time put into practical operation. As that resolution was passed notwithstanding every member of the Evangelist Committee voted against it, as well as many other influential brethren, very little was said about it in the subsequent years; but the men who had resolved upon making the Communion question a test of fraternal co-operation between the American churches and the churches of this country had now become more powerful in their following. This had been brought about mainly by the misrepresentation in this country of the practice of the American churches, and partly because the churches of this country, under the leadership of the new policy, had grown to be more exclusive, especially as regards the Communion question.

The Annual Meeting was held this year at Leicester, and was presided over by Mr. G. Y. Tickle, and as this meeting marks practically a new departure in a most

important matter, and as it is the time from which Mr. Coop's real alienation from the brethren began, it may be well to copy first from the report of the Evangelist Committee, signed by Messrs. G. Y. Tickle, T. Coop, J. Corf, E. Ranicar, and James Marsden, and then from the proceedings of the general meeting.

“Having heard that there was a possibility of Brother Exley returning for a time, at least, to this country, we gladly acted upon the spirit of a resolution passed by you in August 1866, and wrote assuring our dear brother of earnest support and co-operation should he again visit our shores, and enter upon his old field of labour. On receipt of our note he immediately made preparations to come, and arrived here early in June. He landed in Glasgow, and spent the first Lord's Day with the brethren there. He has since devoted three weeks to Liverpool, two to Southport, two weeks' successive meetings to Wigan, and a week each to Manchester and Chelsea.”

The Committee then recommended the importance of securing the services of Mr. Exley for at least another year. After this they report as follows:—

“We are glad to state that, through the favour of Brother King, in the first instance, we have had correspondence with Brethren B. Franklin of Cincinnati and John F. Rowe of Akron, Ohio, two well-known and eloquent preachers of the Gospel, who have stated their willingness, should the brethren invite them, to come and spend about six months amongst the churches of Great Britain. This correspondence we shall have pleasure in presenting for your consideration.”

It will be seen that the Evangelist Committee was

quite in sympathy with the employment of Mr. Exley, and also of Mr. Franklin and Mr. Rowe. But when this report of the Committee was presented, these recommendations elicited considerable discussion, and, finally, the following relating to the two latter evangelists was passed :—

“That in view of the considerations presented to the meeting in relation to the desirability of inviting Brethren Franklin and Rowe of America to spend six months in this country, we deem it advisable to acknowledge their kind offer, and to inform them that the association is not at present in a position to undertake arrangements for the visit.”

However, before this resolution was passed, a preliminary resolution, indicating the spirit of the meeting, was passed, as follows :—

“That only members of the churches on the list of churches co-operating be present at the business meetings of our annual gatherings, unless by permission of the meeting.”

After this, the question of inducing Mr. Exley to remain in this country for, at least, another year came up for consideration. Inquiry was made concerning his practice in reference to communing at the Lord's Table with unbaptized persons, it being understood that under certain circumstances he did so commune. The resolution of the Annual Meeting at Nottingham was finally read, and then a deputation, consisting of Messrs. D. King, R. Black, and W. McDougall, was appointed to ascertain

from Mr. Exley his exact position in regard to the practice in question, he, owing to physical indisposition, having left the meeting before the subject was introduced. This deputation saw Mr. Exley, and during the conference he frankly stated what the American position was, and what had been his own practice. The deputation subsequently reported, after which it was resolved, "That the suggestion of the Committee as to engaging Brother Exley *be not acted upon.*"

This was the straw which broke the camel's back. Of course the wording of the resolution was intentionally indefinite. Even now the meeting was not prepared to face the question squarely, and affirm the doctrine which was implied in the appointment of the Committee, and in the resolution which was passed. This would have been too bad, especially in view of the fact that Mr. Exley had been so long in their service, and had received such high commendations from them at former meetings. Hence it was thought best to put Mr. Exley aside by simply refusing to entertain the proposition of his re-engagement, but to say nothing more in regard to the matter.

However, this plan did not succeed as well as its authors supposed it would. The members of the Evangelist Committee had heartily recommended Mr. Exley, and he had made himself very popular among the churches—had, indeed, received the highest commendations both from the churches and from the Annual

Meetings. Under these circumstances it would have been impossible to ignore him in the style that was done, had it not been for the Nottingham resolution, which was waved in the face of the brethren as an appeal to their consistency. This made some vote for the resolution who imagined that consistency is an important thing, even when to be consistent makes it necessary to be in the wrong.

There were, however, a few determined spirits whose voice was all the time in favour of the most extreme measures. Indeed, although the spirit of the movement in this country had never been exactly the same that it was in America, nevertheless the churches here had maintained fraternal relations with the churches of America, and had always looked with pride to their brethren on the other side of the Atlantic, whose success had been almost phenomenal. But since the time when Mr. Wallis gave up the editorship of the *Harbinger* to Mr. King, that magazine had largely contributed to the cultivation of extreme views upon several questions, and especially the Communion question. And as it was the most influential magazine published among the brethren, Mr. King had gradually been able to change in some respects the type of the whole movement.

It is not strange, therefore, that the new order of things gained a signal triumph at the Leicester meeting. What had before been simply asserted in theory was now practically put into operation, and the consequence was

that one of the best and truest men who ever laboured for the churches in this country was unceremoniously dropped from the service of the Evangelist Committee ; and what was worse, he had to carry with him, in his seclusion, what amounted to almost a vote of censure upon him by his brethren. And all this, too, was done in the face of the fact that Mr. Campbell's views, and the views of the American brethren, had been widely known in this country for nearly thirty years before this meeting at Leicester.

The action of the Leicester meeting greatly excited Mr. Coop. He had already grown too much to any longer tolerate with patience what he regarded as religious bigotry. Hence, with intense earnestness he opposed the action of the meeting. Between Mr. Exley and Mr. Coop there had grown up a personal friendship, and Mr. Coop felt Mr. Exley's treatment almost as much as if it had been directed against himself. Indeed, the action of the meeting was doubtless intended partly as a reproof to Mr. Coop, who was at this time known to have great sympathy with the American brethren. And he was so strongly impressed with the notion that the American churches had been misrepresented in the letters written by Mr. King, that he even went so far as to offer to pay the whole of Mr. King's travelling expenses if he would visit America and see for himself. The point in controversy was not so much as to the *theory* of Communion expressed by the American churches as it was



their *practice*; and consequently Mr. Coop thought that a visit by Mr. King to America was the best way for him to settle the question.

The Communion *theory* was clearly stated by some of the American leading writers. In addition to the extracts already given from Mr. Campbell, it may be well to quote the following from letters printed in Mr. King's *Harbinger* for 1862, taken from the writings of some of the leading men of the American churches. Dr. Isaac Errett who was at that time the able editor of the *Christian Standard* says, "Our practice is neither to invite nor reject." Dr. R. Richardson, who was for many years a professor in Bethany College, and the man to whom was entrusted the writing of the memoirs of Mr. Campbell, states the position in substantially the same language as that used by Dr. Errett. The editor of the *American Christian Review*, Benjamin Franklin, who was up to his death one of the most uncompromising opponents of what Mr. King calls latitudinarian views, says :—

"There are *individuals* among the sects who are not sectarians, or who are more than sectarians—they are Christians; or persons who have believed the Gospel, submitted to it, and, in spite of the leaders, been constituted Christians according to the Scriptures. That these individuals have a right to commune there can be no doubt. But this is not communion with the 'sects.'

"Where is the use of parleying over the question of communing with *unimmersed persons*? Did the first Christians commune with unimmersed persons? It is admitted they did not. Shall we then deliberately do what we admit they did not do?

“When an unimmersed person communes without any *inviting* or *excluding*, that is *his own* act, not *ours*, and we are not responsible for it. We do not see that any harm is done to him or us, and we need no exclusive remarks to keep him away, and we certainly have no authority for inviting him to come.

“If it is to be maintained that ‘except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God’—that ‘as many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,’ as we have it in the Scriptures, and that none were in the church or recognised as Christians, in apostolic times, who were not immersed, it is useless for us to be talking about *unimmersed Christians*, and thus weakening the hands of those who are labouring to induce all to enter the kingdom of God according to the Scriptures.

“We have nothing to do with any *Open* Communion or *Close* Communion. The Communion is for the Lord’s people, and nobody else. But if some imagine themselves to have become Christians according to the Scriptures when they have not, and commune, as we said before, that is *their* act, and not *ours*. We commune with the Lord and His people, and certainly not in spirit with any who are not His people, whether immersed or unimmersed. We take no responsibility in the matter, for we neither invite nor exclude.”

Now if the following is added from Mr. Campbell himself, written in the year 1837, when he was in the prime of his life, for the purpose, as he himself says, of reproving some who were in the habit of “greatly and unreasonably abusing the sects, or countenancing, aiding, and abetting them that did so, and who made Christianity to turn more upon immersion than upon *universal holiness*,” it is evident that there can no longer be any doubt

about the action of the Leicester meeting being entirely opposed to the whole spirit of the movement of the American churches. Mr. Campbell, after discussing the difference between the mistakes of the understanding and errors of action, says :—

“Many a good man has been mistaken. Mistakes are to be regarded as culpable, and as declarative of a corrupt heart only when they proceed from a wilful neglect of the means of knowing what is commanded. Ignorance is always a crime when it is voluntary, and innocent when it is involuntary. Now, unless I could prove that all who neglect the positive institutions of Christ, and have substituted for them something else of human authority, do it knowingly, or, if not knowingly, are voluntarily ignorant of what is written, I could not, I dare not, say that their mistakes are such as unchristianize all their profession.

“True, indeed, that it is always a misfortune to be ignorant of anything in the Bible, and very generally it is criminal. But how many are there who cannot read ; and of those who can read, how many are so deficient in education ; and of those educated, how many are ruled by the authority of those whom they regard as superiors in knowledge and piety, that they never can escape out of the dust and smoke of their own chimney, where they happen to be born and educated ! These all suffer many privations and many perplexities, from which the more intelligent are exempt.

“The preachers of ‘*essentials*,’ as well as the preachers of ‘*non-essentials*,’ frequently err. The essentialist may disparage the heart, while the non-essentialist despises the institution. The latter makes void the institutions of heaven, while the former appreciates not the mental bias which God loveth most. My correspondent may belong to a class who think that we detract

from the authority and value of an institution the moment we admit the bare possibility of anyone being saved without it. But we choose rather to associate with those who think that they do not undervalue either seeing or hearing, by affirming that neither of them, nor both of them together, are essential to life. I would not sell one of my eyes for all the gold on earth ; yet I could live without it.

“ There is no occasion, then, for making immersion, on a profession of the faith, absolutely essential to a Christian, though it may be greatly essential to his sanctification and comfort. My right hand and my right eye are greatly essential to my usefulness and happiness, but not to my life ; and as I could not be a perfect man without them, so I cannot be a perfect Christian without a right understanding and a cordial reception of immersion in its true and scriptural meaning and design. But he that thence infers that none are Christians but the immersed as greatly errs as he who affirms that none are alive but those of clear and full vision.

“ I do not formally answer all the queries proposed, knowing the one point to which they all aim. To that point only I direct these remarks. And while I would unhesitatingly say that I think that every man who despises any ordinance of Christ, or who is willingly ignorant of it, cannot be a Christian ; still, I should sin against my own convictions should I teach anyone to think that, if he mistook the meaning of any institution, while in his soul he desired to know the whole will of God, he must perish for ever. But, to conclude for the present : he that claims for himself a licence to neglect the least of all the commandments of Jesus, because it is possible for some to be saved who, through insuperable ignorance or involuntary mistake, do neglect or transgress it ; or he that wilfully neglects to ascertain the will of the Lord to the whole extent of his means and opportunities, because some who are defective in that knowledge may be Christians, is not possessed of the Spirit of Christ, and cannot

be registered among the Lord's people. So I reason ; and I think, in so reasoning, I am sustained by all the prophets and apostles of both Testaments."

These extracts, however, must not be interpreted as indicating any loose habits among the American churches as respects the Communion question. Mr. King's letters, already referred to, made statements about the practice of these churches which, to put the matter in the most favourable light for Mr. King, were exaggerations of exceptional cases. The churches undoubtedly, as a whole, taught faithfully all the conditions of the gospel, and strictly adhered to the practice, as indicated by the extracts which have been quoted.

But no matter whether the churches in America were right or wrong on the question at issue, Mr. Coop, at least, did not hesitate any longer to practically maintain the American position. He had learned to believe that the whole doctrine of Close, or restricted, Communion, as practised by the "Churches of Christ" in this country, was based wholly upon a pure *inference*. He said this inference might or might not be logical, but at the very best it was *only an inference* ; and as the plea which had been made for a return to the apostolic faith and practice was based upon a "thus saith the Lord" for everything that was binding in religious life, he contended that it was a direct violation of the fundamental principle of the plea to assume that baptism was absolutely necessary as an antecedent to

the partaking of the Lord's Supper. He still believed that only baptized believers were constitutionally and scripturally meeting all the conditions required in the case of Church membership, but he felt that in the present abnormal state of Christendom it was going a little too far when one Christian presumed to decide for another what he should exactly do in showing his fealty to the Lord Jesus Christ.

He saw, or thought he saw, a difference between persons who *believed they had been baptized*, though these persons had received only infant sprinkling, and persons who *rejected* baptism altogether. In the first case, the persons were simply mistaken in their views of what baptism is ; but in the last there was deliberate rejection of the Lord's authority. While Mr. Coop earnestly contended that the persons who were mistaken should seek to correct their mistakes, and thus render a scriptural obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, still, he was willing to give such persons time for investigation before condemning them for accepting a position which, however unscriptural, was, nevertheless, conscientiously adhered to, because it had been accepted mainly through circumstances over which they themselves had no control. Mr. Coop contended that such persons, while they conscientiously accepted sprinkling as baptism, had the *spirit* of obedience, though they had not obeyed the *form* which was commanded in the New Testament. This position was regarded as defensible only so long as it gave con-

scientious persons reasonable time to correct their mistake ; and the language of Christ to His own disciples, " I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now," was quoted in proof of this position. Mr. Coop claimed that kind treatment and patience would do much more to gain such persons over to the truth than any rigid police arrangement, which would be offensive to the feeling of those who believed themselves to be scripturally Christians.

Indeed, the assumption on which restricted Communion was based seemed to Mr. Coop as involving the quint-essence of religious bigotry ; and the last vestige of this, as already noted, had been thoroughly rooted out of Mr. Coop's character. He felt that he was himself free, and this conscious personal freedom made him anxious about the freedom of others. He was not willing to enjoy his liberty alone, but sought, as far as possible, to impress upon his brethren his own generous spirit. And when he found that his brethren were going to such extremes as the action of the Leicester meeting indicated, he was profoundly discouraged as regards the whole movement. And this feeling was intensified by the meagreness of the results which had been accomplished during the entire time he had been associated with the churches. He was not unreasonable. In reviewing the whole history of the past he could readily see that there was a difference in the condition of the two countries. It was clear to his mind that there was a better opportunity for success

with such a plea in America than in this country. But after making all allowance, he could not help feeling that two things, at least, had greatly hindered the work here. The first of these was the constant failure to put into the field able and efficient evangelists. This had been almost a hobby with Mr. Coop from the very beginning, and, consequently, year by year he urged it upon the attention of his brethren; for, until the Leicester meeting, he had not been entirely without hope that a sufficient number of American evangelists would ultimately be secured, to make the work here something like a success. The other hindrance was the tendency of the churches to become more restricted, rather than more liberal, in regard to the Communion question.

The Leicester meeting, therefore, left Mr. Coop practically without much hope for the future of the churches. However, he was still willing to do what he could, and, as a consequence, he still retained his position as treasurer of the Evangelist Committee, a position which he held in all for about twenty years. He, furthermore, proposed to help liberally in any earnest effort that promised success. But he soon saw that the leading brethren were apparently more concerned about keeping out of the churches what they called "heresy" than in getting into the churches new converts. In other words, the whole movement seemed to him to have degenerated into what he called simply "holding the fort," but he saw very little tendency on the part of the



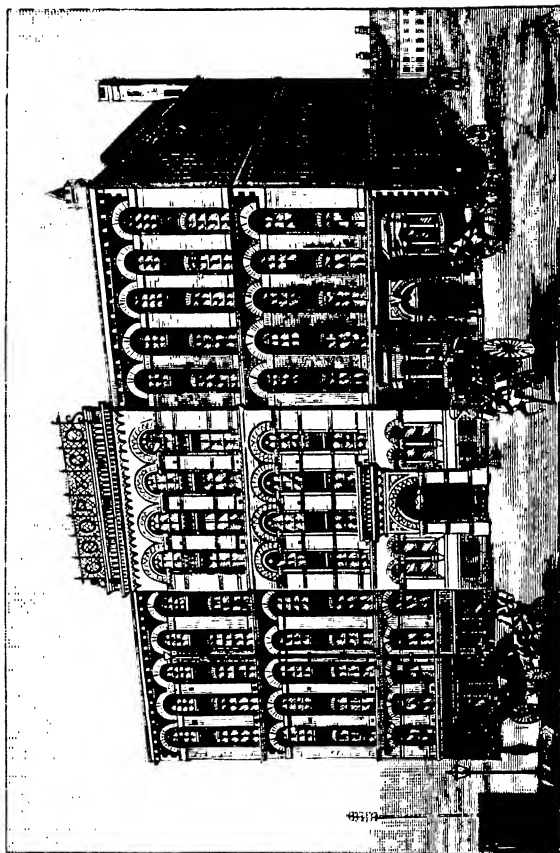
leaders to inspire anything like a great forward movement.

This state of things he most sincerely regretted. He had come home from America with a strong desire to do something worthy of his Master. He had been greatly blessed in his business, and now found that he had at his disposal a considerable amount of surplus cash. Very much of this he was quite willing to invest in the Lord's work, but he saw little or no opportunity to do this through the agencies which he had heretofore adopted. In view of this state of things, it is not strange that he became considerably discouraged with regard to his future religious work.

However, he was by no means inactive in his business. Immediately after he returned from America he began to devise ways and means for extending his business operations. As his son-in-law, Mr. Marsden, was now associated with him, he was relieved from much of mere details, and was, consequently, enabled to give more attention to general supervision.

It has already been mentioned that Mr. Coop very early in life gave evidence of superior mechanical ability, and now this ability was of great service to him. The firm having secured a large plot of land in Dorning Street, Mr. Coop began to draw up plans for building suitable premises to meet their rapidly increasing trade. He gave himself earnestly to the preparation of these plans; and, as an evidence of the interest which he





BUSINESS PREMISES, DORNINGTON STREET, WIGAN.

took in the matter, it may be well to quote what he himself says :—

“While I was in America my eyes were opened in regarded to some important business matters. I learned the value of using machinery in the work of manufacturing. So I determined that our new premises should be built with a view to the use of such machinery as would be profitable in cutting and making clothing.

“One day, while I was busy sketching the ground plan, the Mayor of Wigan came into my office and saw what I was doing. He said, ‘You are making a mistake.’ He then indicated how he thought I ought to make my plans ; for, said he, if it does not answer your purpose you can then turn it into a cotton mill. ‘But,’ I said, ‘I have no thought of a cotton mill. We are not thinking of failure. We intend to make it a success.’

“At last the plans were completed, and the building began to go up. During the whole time of its erection the people of the town were making all kinds of remarks about it. Some said it was going to be a warehouse, some an infirmary, others thought that I had been to America and had brought back some foolish Yankee notions. However, through the mercy of God, the building was completed without a single accident.”

On March 4th, 1872, the building was opened with what Mr. Coop called “a scriptural feast”—a feast similar to his marriage feast, which has already been described. The poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind were all represented. The tables were spread in the top room, and the elevator was used as well as the stone stairway. All who were able to do so went up by the stairway, but the very old, the lame, and blind were taken up in the elevator. This elevator was itself a great

novelty to many persons, as it had not been generally introduced in this country at that time. The feast was in every respect a great success, and was followed by music, singing, and short speeches. All returned to their homes with glad hearts, while good wishes were expressed on every side for the success of Messrs. Coop & Co., who had been so generous in dispensing hospitality.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE RUBICON CROSSED.

THE year 1872 was not barren of interesting political events. The Ballot Bill, though at first rejected by the House of Lords, was finally passed, and, as a consequence, parliamentary elections henceforth became much less tumultuous, the exciting incidents of public nominations, hourly declarations of the poll, and other practices which opened the way for corruption and disturbance, having been abolished by this Act.

Another Bill of considerable importance passed this year was the Licensing Bill. Though this would scarcely meet the requirements of the Temperance conscience of the present day, it was then regarded as a very important step in the progress of restricting the drink traffic. The Bill elicited very general discussion, and the drink interest opposed it very strenuously. The measure did not meet Mr. Coop's view of what was required, but then he was willing to take a half loaf rather than no bread at all; and, consequently, he took considerable interest in the agitation which resulted in the passage of the Bill. He had always been a pronounced temperance man, and

looked with great pleasure upon any movement which tended to abolish the drink traffic, or even limit it in any respect whatever.

But the event of this year which interested him most was the arbitration of the *Alabama* dispute with the United States. Mr. Coop had greatly feared that the *Alabama* incident would precipitate the two countries into war. It has already been seen that he expressed this fear to General Garfield when he met him in the United States. While General Garfield's assurance helped Mr. Coop to a more optimistic view of the matter, he was, nevertheless, somewhat concerned about the final result until the settlement which took place in this year. He had become so intensely interested in America and in American affairs, and was so anxious about maintaining friendly relations between the two countries, that perhaps very few persons were more delighted than he was at the peaceful arbitration of what at one time seemed to be a very threatening war-cloud.

The way was first opened for peaceful arbitration by a frank acknowledgment on the part of Her Majesty's Government of regret, and as the language of this expression of regret is so frank and hearty, and so unusual in international affairs, it deserves to be repeated in every book dealing with the history of the times, as one of the crowning glories of Mr. Gladstone's administration. The language was as follows:—"Her Britannic Majesty has authorised her High Commissioners and

Plenipotentiaries to express in a friendly spirit the regret felt by Her Majesty's Government for the escape, under whatever circumstances, of the *Alabama* and other vessels from British ports, and for the depredations committed by those vessels."

This language at once riveted the attention of Mr. Coop, and elicited his warmest admiration. He already felt himself greatly indebted to Mr. Gladstone for helping him into a broader religious liberty, and now he felt under new obligations to him because of his earnest efforts in behalf of the principle of peaceful arbitration. He was no Jingo. Although he possessed naturally a rather combative spirit, this had become so tempered by the conditions through which his character had been developed that war was repulsive to him in the extreme. He loved peace. But this was a principle with him rather than the natural bent of his mind. And in this respect he was somewhat peculiar. Very many of his habits of life were formed and conscientiously practised in direct opposition to the natural promptings of his impulsive and intensely aggressive nature. He often said that the old Adam wanted him to do many things that the new Adam restrained him from doing. He, like Paul, had a constant conflict within himself. When he would do good evil was present ; but, like Paul, he was able to do all things through Christ Who strengthened him.

The foregoing events had much more interest for him than the Franco-Prussian war, which had occupied most



of the two preceding years. However, he took a lively interest in the termination of that war and the establishment of a French Republic. His decided Liberalism tended constantly toward Republican institutions. Undoubtedly he had a high regard for the English form of government, and perhaps Her Majesty had no subject more loyal than he was. Nevertheless, he believed heartily in popular government, and he often said if all the good things of the English and American governments were united, and the evil things expelled from both, the very best form of government would be the result. And he had an abiding faith that a more intimate knowledge of each other would be helpful to both English and Americans.

The Annual Meeting of the churches was held in 1873 at the Rodney Street Church, Wigan, and was presided over by Mr. R. Black of London. At this meeting, Mr. Coop made a vigorous objection to the resolution of the last Annual Meeting, which excluded all persons from attending the business meetings except members of churches on the list of churches co-operating. Mr. Coop's protest raised a somewhat heated discussion, but the resolution was finally re-affirmed by a considerable majority.

Mr. Coop's protest against this resolution was practically his last earnest effort at the Annual Meetings to stay the tide which, according to his notion, was sweeping the churches into the vortex of an irretrievable bigotry. And his failure to succeed made it evident to him that, so far

as the Annual Meetings were concerned, the final result seemed inevitable. He did not believe that the churches generally sympathised with the narrow views expressed at the Annual Meeting by the leaders of the extreme brethren; but as he had no means of reaching these churches directly, except in a few instances, he saw that it was impossible to do much to remedy the evil which had begun to so fearfully work. Of this period Mr. Coop himself writes :—

“I had now practically lost heart so far as getting anything properly done at the Annual Meetings was concerned. I still retained my position as treasurer of the Evangelist Fund, and hoped against hope that something, at any rate, would be done in spreading the Gospel; but I no longer regarded with interest the deliberations of the annual gatherings. It was evident that these were taken up principally with talk and very little real work. The business was largely that of regulating the churches and private individuals, and in trying to keep the churches free from heterodoxy; while no inconsiderable time was employed in an apparent effort to set the American churches right on the Communion question and other kindred matters.”

About this time Mr. Coop began to suspect that the Annual Meeting was beginning to exercise an authority which was never thought of when these meetings began. Indeed, he saw that a little ecclesiasticism had already begun to grow; and although the cloud may not have been at that time much larger than a man's hand in the estimation of many, Mr. Coop himself thought he saw a dangerous storm gathering. This added to his dis-

satisfaction with the state of things. Some of his feelings and apprehensions may be gathered from letters written during this year. The following letter gives an interesting insight to Mr. Coop's mind in the early part of the year 1873 :—

“ *January 24th, 1873.*

“DEAR BROTHER EVANS,—It seems a long time since we had a few lines from you.

“Being now a prisoner, and confined to my house with a cold since Monday, I begin to ramble in mind on all sorts of subjects, objects, and persons, and now you come under review.

“Well! I hear you have gone to Scotland, a place where all the great and the noble go for a change, especially to Bonnie Dundee, that place of late in *our* Christian world where we hear from the outer newspaper world so much of the new Christian Temple. It would be refreshing to us to hear how you are getting on, and all the news you can give us, and when you begin to feel that another change of scenery and country is desirable I would suggest to your mind Lancashire. If we have not large and magnificent mountains, we have some tall chimneys and deep coal-pits. If we have not classes, universities, and colleges, we have a few churches and Sunday-schools; and of late we have added school boards, on one of which your humble brother has the honour to be a member. If we have not so many reverends and lords, we certainly have some noble souls—brothers of the King of Glory. We have some other things—a number of sin-stricken souls that need healing and comfort, and we believe that the God of heaven has given you specially the balm of Gilead, and made you a suitable medium to convey it to others.

“And now there are three corners of the vineyard which require such a one as you. Do you wish me to name them? I do so

gladly—Blackburn, Wigan, and Southport. In whichever corner you located you would not be far from the others, so that there might be a pleasant change with little expense. And as an additional consideration, you would not be required to be away from your family long.

“Before the Annual Meeting, the Committee had invited Brother Exley to labour in England at least twelve months. But as the Annual Meeting rejected him, Brother Graham and myself have made him an offer, which is now under his consideration, and I hope in a few weeks to have a definite answer.

“Should he accept of our offer and come and live in Southport, do you think you could labour with him cheerfully and heartily? or will the fact of his having been in that unfortunate country, the country in which the notorious Alexander Campbell lived and died, cause you to refuse to co-operate with him in preaching the Gospel? As to his preaching and teaching in this and other countries, I have never heard a word against his orthodoxy, so that question does not need to be discussed. I think what we want in preachers and people is more of the love of God and the spirit and grace of Christ.

“In Lancashire there appears a good opening, if we can only get the right men to fill the places.

“We do not require men with peculiar gifts to discern and show the difference between Christian Brethren and the sects. We have had plenty of that kind of work done to satisfy us for some time. I feel more disposed to associate with those who are near us, and show what little difference there is, and try to make it less. The Baptists in Wigan and the Brethren are much more friendly now than formerly; and if we had more evangelists in this town I have no doubt but they would interchange with us. We have a very nice little gathering here, and our Sunday-school is improving, so that we live in hope of an increase,

"When you see this long letter you will wonder what has come over me.

"I am glad to say that my wife is a little better, though she has got her winter cough, and it troubles her much at times.

"The doctor says I had better not go to business this week, and hopes I shall be all right by Monday.

"With Christian love, in which my wife unites,

"I am, yours fraternally,

"T. Coop."

The following is in reply to one from Mr. G. Sinclair on his view of the Evangelist question, and is of special interest:—

"You say I have given up the search for a precedent in carrying out a system of evangelisation, that there is nothing definite, etc. And then you say I gave a case where two were sent forth. Two what? Evangelists or Apostles? Was that the first time they were sent forth to preach? Was it not their profession or calling before? I have *not* given up the search yet to understand this Evangelist business. So I will go again to Antioch.

"*1st.* I find a church gifted with a good supply of prophets and teachers.

"*2nd.* They are a devout, religious church.

"*3rd.* They had a special revelation from the Holy Ghost about missionary work.

"*4th.* Which resulted in sending two of their number on a missionary tour.

"You say I am not so happy in classifications of professions, etc.

"Let us come to plain facts and truths. What is an evangelist, or who are evangelists? Am I an evangelist? Are all my

brethren and sisters that preach the Gospel evangelists? Is it understood by the Christian brethren that you are now an evangelist? I remember the time when you preached, and you were not considered an evangelist; and I know the time when you were called an evangelist. What was it that made the difference? Was it some special act of the Church—fasting, praying, or laying on of hands? Or was it when you gave up your ordinary work and devoted all your time to the work of evangelisation, and were supported by the churches? So that after all there *is* the look of profession.

“I believe with you that all true preachers are raised up by the grace of God or the providence of God, but do not understand your remarks about letting God have more to do in the disposing of His ministers, etc.

“You say the evangelist should not look to the committee, etc., where he should go, etc., but that the committee should look after his wants.

“This brings me back to the professional view. I think you will agree with me that all the Disciples of Christ are, or ought to be, preachers of the Gospel, so that there requires no special church meeting or pastors’ meeting to give authority.

“But this professional business does require some special arrangement, and is in perfect harmony with the Acts of the Apostles. If one brother engages another brother to do a certain work and pays him for it, the brother engaged should seek the will and direction of the one that engaged him, and should give an account of the work performed, just as Paul and Barnabas did on their return from their evangelist tour. The same applies to a committee or to a church.

“You say something about not being changed at hearing the soft talk about being more charitable with the sects.

“I am not ashamed to say that there is a change in me. I feel to have far more charity and forbearance with what you

call sects than I used to have in former years, and I think this is in harmony with both the letter and the spirit of the Gospel."

Ten days before the Annual Meeting of 1874 a very special friend of Mr. Coop died, by the name of Graham, who had the somewhat unusual Christian name of "Doctor." Doctor Graham was by trade a tailor, and a customer of Mr. Coop's old friend Mr. Haigh of Huddersfield. He was immersed about the time that Mr. Coop was, but they had no acquaintance until several years afterward. He finally became associated with an old and wealthy firm of paper-makers at Darwen, and was appointed as one of their principal travellers for Great Britain, the Continent, and the United States. He became an active partner in the firm about 1861, which was the year in which Mr. Coop was appointed treasurer of the Evangelist Fund for the churches, and in this way they became acquainted with each other. Doctor Graham travelled a great deal, and in many countries, but wherever he went he had the *British Millennial Harbinger* sent to him, as he was always very much interested in the Lord's work. Mr. Coop speaks of him as follows :—

"He used to tell me of his visit and meeting with the church in New York City, for whom Dr. S. E. Shephard was preaching at that time. Dr. Shephard was a very able man, and Doctor Graham was greatly interested in his preaching. After he knew that I had been to America, he seemed to be drawn more closely to me, and discussed freely the difference of views be-

tween the English and American brethren. He went thoroughly with the Americans, and after Brothers Earl and Exley had been over, he began to help by giving very liberally to the Evangelist Fund. The first cheque he gave was for £10, and then £40. At another time he came over to enquire how we were getting on. I told him we had engaged six evangelists, and we should now require more money. His reply was, 'Draw on me to the amount of £400 per annum.' I induced him to go to one of our Annual Meetings, thinking that he would get still more interested in our work, but he was not impressed by the manner in which the meeting was conducted.

"An incident occurred which would have been amusing had it not been so serious. At one of our Annual Meetings, I well remember, a considerable time had been taken up discussing the question of receiving money from the world, and having boxes at the door for any one to put money in. It was contended that no one ought to be allowed to give that was not a member of the church. The church of which David King was a member had got so far advanced that it was considered wrong for any one to offer a hymn book to a stranger. At this time Doctor Graham was connected with no particular church, and did not even attend regularly anywhere. Some one suggested that it looked rather strange for David King to make such a fuss about receiving money from non-members, whilst the largest contributor to the Evangelist Fund was not a member of any church, nor had been for years. The matter was eagerly entered into, and a committee appointed, consisting of King and Tickle, to wait upon Doctor Graham and remonstrate with him in regard to the matter. They finally went to see him and sent for him to meet them, as they had important business with him.

"He came to see me subsequently, and gave me an account of the interview. He said that when they pressed the matter about his giving so largely to the Evangelist Fund, not being a



member of any particular church, he wished to know if they put it as a threat that if he did not join some one of the churches they would not receive his money. They said no, they did not want him to receive their admonition as a threat, but to put it to him what his duty was. He then said, 'I will consider the matter,' but distinctly told them that they must remember he was away very much of his time, and that there was no church in the town where he was living, and, furthermore, that the nearest place where he could go was four miles distant. However, he did consider the matter, and finally began to go to the little church at Blackburn. I have been told that he gave the brethren there some beautiful addresses. He told me that if the committee had put it to him as a threat he would have broken off all connection with the brethren, but he was glad they had the good sense not to do so.

"He soon became interested in the work at Blackburn, and I, knowing that the room was small and uncomfortable, suggested to him the propriety of building a nice place for them. He said he had no time to look after it, and did not understand building, but if I would draw him a plan, and see after the house being built, he would undertake to meet the expense. So I consented, and gave a rough sketch for a meeting-room and two cottages. The cost was over £900, and he paid all expenses, and put the place in trust, requesting G. Y. Tickle and myself be trustees. The balance of the rent of the houses, after paying expenses for keeping the room clean and in repair, was to go to the Christian Chapel Building Fund.

"At his death he left £1,000 to the Evangelist Fund (he had promised £1,000 to the Building Fund, £400 of which was paid a few months before, and on his deathbed he conveyed the chapel in Blackburn to the Building Fund. The balance of £600 we did not get, on account of a legal difficulty), £500 to the temperance cause, and a number of other legacies.

“He left his nephew, who was named after him, somewhere about £150,000, and his wife an annual income, with the furniture of his house, horses, carriages, etc. I have been told, though I cannot vouch for the truth, that the nephew, whom he brought up and put in a good business, besides leaving him this money, within twelve months after the death of his uncle got an Act of Parliament to change his Christian name, as he did not like to be called *Doctor* Fish, after his uncle and godfather, and so had it altered to Graham Fish.”

At the Annual Meeting of 1874 the following resolution was passed with respect to the bequest made by Doctor Graham to the Evangelist Fund :—

“That the £1,000 left by our late Brother D. Graham, for evangelistic purposes, be left in the hands of the Evangelist Committee, asking them as far as they possibly can to dispose of it in the following way : that £300 be used this year, £200 the second year, £150 the third year, £100 the fourth, fifth, and sixth years, and £50 the seventh year, with the accumulated interest, which exhausts the sum.”

The year 1875 was crowded with important events in connection with the life of Mr. Coop. One of these events transpired in America. At the Annual Convention of the Disciples of Christ, or Churches of Christ, as they are called in that country, held in Louisville, a Foreign Christian Missionary Society was for the first time practically inaugurated. This body of Christians had sent missionaries to foreign countries before this. Their missionary, Dr. J. T. Barclay, the author of *The City of the Great King*, had spent a number of years in

Jerusalem, and his mission, with one or two others, had stimulated the missionary spirit at home; but no very definite movement had been made to organise foreign missionary work. However, at the Convention referred to, an address was delivered on Foreign Missions, and a society organised called the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, with its headquarters at Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mr. H. S. Earl, who had been living in America for some time after his return from Australia, was present with his family at this Convention. It was understood that they were soon to sail for England, where Mr. Earl proposed to permanently locate, in order to preach the Gospel. After the board of officers of the new society had been appointed, one of these, who had formerly been in England, and had been requested by brethren while there to help them to get evangelists from America, approached Mr. Earl and asked him something about his plans. Mr. Earl stated that he was returning to England entirely on his own account, and at his own expense. He said he was confident that he could select some eligible place and build up a good self-sustaining work. He thought, however, that this would take time, and until the work was self-sustaining his expenses would be very considerable.

Mr. Earl came before the board, and made a statement in accordance with the foregoing facts, after which it was proposed and adopted to make Mr. Earl one of the

missionaries of the society, offering him such help as might be practicable during the year, and intimating that at any rate the society would probably be able to help him to the amount of £100. Mr. Earl gladly accepted the position, and soon after the close of the Convention went on his way to England, and the society did help him the first year to the amount mentioned, and thereafter liberally every year, though he himself was not sure of any help until he had been in England several months. He soon selected Southampton as the point at which to begin his labours. He took the Music Hall, and began to preach to large congregations, the hall frequently being crowded in all parts at the evening service.

It was not long until Mr. Coop visited Mr. Earl at his new place, and saw what he believed was a practical demonstration of the wisdom of the policy which he had so long urged. But he still maintained his relations with his brethren in this country, and was still treasurer of the Evangelist Fund, though he felt that nothing commensurate with the needs of the country was even attempted by those with whom he was religiously associated. He was delighted with Mr. Earl's prospects, and did not hesitate to give him hearty sympathy. He also pointed to the success at Southampton in comparison with the success which had been achieved at various points where the evangelistic efforts of his brethren had been made. He contended

that the difference was mainly due to two things—first, the wisdom of treating kindly those who did not accept the whole truth as his brethren understood it ; and secondly, in devising liberal means for the carrying on of such a work. He saw that Mr. Earl's services, counting the rent of the Music Hall and Mr. Earl's own living, was more than half as much as the whole amount reported at the last Annual Meeting by all the " Churches of Christ " in the United Kingdom.

It was this small benevolence, as well as the narrow creed, of the brethren to which Mr. Coop objected. He often said he could put up with a narrow creed, if the practice was right, better than a liberal creed with a narrow practice. He had been from year to year urging his brethren to a benevolence somewhat equal to their ability. He recognised that most of the churches were made up of poor people ; nevertheless, he knew well enough that there were some very rich men among the brethren, one of whom was reported to be worth at least a quarter of a million pounds, while others were, if not very wealthy, quite able to contribute liberally to the spread of the gospel, if their zeal in evangelistic work had been equal to their zeal for orthodoxy. He could not help feeling that the Annual Meeting had now become a mere engine in the hands of a few men, who had succeeded in diverting it from its original purpose (*viz.*, that of devising ways and means for the spread of the gospel) to a narrow

proscriptive policy of practical creed-making, and pronouncing upon the soundness of those who claimed the right to think for themselves.

It is not here affirmed that Mr. Coop was right in all of his conclusions. This fact is simply stated to justify his subsequent course as a conscientious man. Feeling as he did, it is difficult to understand how he could have acted differently. That he was conscientious, not even his bitterest enemies would for a moment doubt; but if his conscientiousness is admitted, then it is simply certain that he could not very well remain where he was without entering his protest against what seemed to him to be an illiberal policy in regard to both faith and practice.

On May 21st, 1875, his wife, Mrs. Ellen Coop, died. She had for some time been gradually failing, though occasionally there were hopeful signs of recovery. She bore her sufferings with the calmest resignation, and at last died in the triumphs of the faith which had sustained her during the whole period of her Christian life.

Mrs. Coop was in many respects a remarkable woman. Possessing in a large degree many of the gentler characteristics of her sex, she had the courage, fortitude, and endurance which are usually associated with the strongest natures. She was especially a wise counsellor. She swayed a gentle sceptre, but the influence of her power was very great. She was modest and retiring, but her authority was regal in its potentiality, as well as in its

comprehensiveness. She loved peace, but she loved truth more. She counselled against all extremes, but always stood like a rock in defence of what she conscientiously believed was duty. Though wholly undemonstrative in almost every particular, her influence was felt throughout a very wide circle of friends, and in the church at Southport it was almost unrivalled.

Her influence over her husband was great as well as good. She seemed to be exactly the necessary supplement of his own somewhat impetuous and restless nature. She was calm, self-possessed, and orderly. He was bold, enterprising, and sometimes almost reckless in his efforts to "drive ahead." Her gentle hand was just the help that he needed. Her touch brought his whole nature at her feet. And it was, therefore, to her leading that he was indebted for much of the success which he had been enabled to achieve. And no one was more ready to admit this than Mr. Coop himself. He always revered her memory, and could scarcely ever speak of her in after years without shedding tears.

Mrs. Coop's death was keenly felt by a large circle, and, outside of her own family, by none more so than the members of the churches at Wigan and Southport. In the first-mentioned church she had been a long and faithful worker; and in the last she had been instrumental in starting the church, and had been with it through all of its history. In both of these churches her noble Christian character was held in the highest esteem.

Some time before her death it was decided to build a new place of worship in Southport, the one in Sussex Road not being sufficient to meet the demands of the growing congregation. Mrs. Coop had taken the liveliest interest in the building of this house, and she had expressed a strong desire to see it completed. However, this was not granted unto her, for the house was not formally opened until a few months after her death.

A year or two before Mrs. Coop's decease, Coop & Co. had a business experience which marks an important event in the life of Mr. Coop. And as the record of this in his notes is found unusually full, and as the whole style is so characteristic of the writer, it is deemed best to give the narration in Mr. Coop's own language. It is as follows :—

“A temptation or trial was presented to me—whether it was from the Good Spirit or the evil spirit I will not say.

“An old friend, a magistrate, waited upon me, and in the course of conversation suggested that it would be a good and profitable speculation to buy the Pillitoft Cotton Mills and land adjoining, especially as there was coal and the best cannel under the land, and the mines could be easily worked out in about six years, unless we wished to buy more coal and cannel. Altogether he made out a very plausible case, and I had always considered him a very moderate and wise man. The bait took. I considered the matter and named it to my partner (Mr. J. Marsden). We entertained the proposition. The price was named and accepted, with the understanding that my old friend, who introduced the matter, should be a partner, without finding any money, but giving his time to manage the business. It was soon evident that this



new venture would require a considerable amount of my time and attention.

"There were two cotton-mills on the estate: one full of machinery, and the other a new mill without machinery, besides the land for the colliery.

"After getting the deeds and paying for the estate, we set to work to develop it. We put machinery into the new mill and let it to a cabinet-maker. After a short time it was burned to the ground, and though insured we lost considerably. This was the end of the first mill.

"We made a contract for the sinking of two pit-shafts to work the coal and cannel. As soon as we had got a few cartloads of bricks on the ground, the Government Inspector sent for me. He said, 'I hear you are about to sink two shafts and work out the cannel and coal.' I said, 'We have bought the estate for that purpose.' He said, 'Do you know it is dangerous to sink shafts and work those mines?' I told him I was not aware of this, and had engaged a first-class surveyor, also a good practical manager, and firmly believed that the mines would be worked well and safely. He then said, 'If you begin to sink those shafts, I shall give you notice that there is danger if you get those coals.' I asked, 'Is there any more danger in our getting the coal than anyone else?' He replied, 'If you sink those shafts I shall give you notice for a trial. You had better sell the mines.' 'We will,' I said, 'gladly sell them if we can get a customer.' He said, 'Ince Hall Co. will buy them, and it will be your best plan to sell them.' 'Are you recommending this course as a friend?' I asked. He would not reply directly to this, but said, 'I tell you if you begin to sink I shall give you notice to tub the shafts?' 'What is tubbing?' I enquired. 'You will have to line the shafts with iron from top to bottom.' 'Well,' I replied, 'we can do this, and add a gold ring and polish it, if they will only pay for it.' I then asked him to come and look at the place and give us

his judgment, for we did not want to do anything but what Her Majesty's Inspector approved of. He declined to go then, so we proceeded with the work. He soon served us with a notice.

"Two days later we received notice of an injunction from another party. Six of the largest colliery proprietors in the neighbourhood had combined to assist the Ince Hall Co. and Mr. Crompton to fight the lawsuit.

"We soon received a formal notice of an injunction to stop us sinking the pit-shafts. We were ordered to appear before Vice-Chancellor Hall in London. Our opponents engaged the services of five or six prominent lawyers, and most of the leading civil engineers and colliery surveyors in Wigan and neighbourhood.

"The trial came off, both sides being well represented by counsel, nearly a dozen being retained, the leaders with fifty-guinea fees and refreshers. The case was formally stated and replied to. After this the judge asked, 'Are the defendants respectable men, or is it a bogus case?' Both sides testified to the respectability of the defendants. The judge then said, 'I shall hear the case before I give judgment.'

"This was the first day of the trial, which lasted over four years. It was what the lawyers call a good case. They knew that the Ince Hall Co. had about £40,000 in their capital account, and one of them made a joke with me that he looked upon our large warehouse as good security for our side. The contest had begun, but when it would end none could tell. The lawyers took good care to keep it up to the last day. Both sides were often anxious to settle the dispute, but the lawyers were in no great hurry, and could not be prevailed on to hear any terms of settlement.

"Had we shown the white feather any time during the trial we should have been ruined. Not so on the other side. We would gladly have sold them the mines on reasonable terms, and

they could have worked them to good profit, but the lawyers would not let them settle.

"The cross-examinations came on before a commissioner. Everything had to be written down, every witness sworn, and all plans sworn to and stamped. There were a great many meetings in London, and never without the assistance of the White Wig Counsel.

"We succeeded in sinking shafts and reaching the nine-foot coal. We worked a few tons of this, and then sank deeper to the King coal, and then to the cannel. We then set the men to drive a drift to the extent of our workings, and were astonished to find some one had been helping themselves to our cannel. In fact, we found the initials of the men and the date when the cannel was worked out marked on the roof. We at once charged the Ince Hall Co. with trespassing. They admitted the matter, but said it had been unintentional, and they were willing to pay for the trespass, or, if we preferred, they would give us three tons for every ton they had taken. We were delighted to think that now they had been found out they would be glad to stop the lawsuit. We were, however, mistaken, for they braved the matter out and proceeded with the lawsuit.

"We next prepared for sinking to the lowest mine to work the Arley coal. It was commonly reported that when we got to this we should find no coal, the colliers stating that they had got all the Arley mine three years before. At this point the Ince Hall Co. made a proposition to buy the whole of the Arley coal. This we refused. We thought they would surely give up the trial now, but were again mistaken.

"We went on driving drifts until a new danger appeared. The water began to come into our workings, and gained on us so rapidly that we were likely to be flooded out altogether. I went down the pit almost every day, but could not imagine where the water came from. We were told there was a large body of water

on the higher side of our working, and that the Ince Hall Co. had command of this water. However, there was reported to be a dam of several hundred yards between us and the water. I began to be alarmed. I could not sleep at nights, but lay awake planning, thinking, and praying. We put on all our pumping power, but the water continued to gain on us.

“Our partner (the friend who had suggested the investment) began to be alarmed. A friend told me his health was failing, and he was afraid we should all be ruined. I told this gentleman I should be very sorry if our mutual friend should lose anything, for having known him so long I was greatly interested in his welfare. I suggested to Mr. Marsden that, if he were willing, we might propose that our partner should withdraw, without any loss; and that if we succeeded, and there was a profit within a certain period, we would not forget him. Hearing of this suggestion, he came the next day to see us. We repeated the offer. With tears of thankfulness in his eyes he eagerly accepted the offer. A dissolution of partnership was signed at once, and we alone became responsible for everything. My friend continued to take a part as usual, only without any wage or responsibility.

“During the whole of this anxious time I don’t think Mr. Marsden or myself missed a single religious meeting, either on the Lord’s Day or week nights and visiting. He was pastor of the Christian Church at Wigan, with a membership of about two hundred and fifty. I was a pastor of the Southport Church, besides having more or less the care of several other churches.

“We treated our opponents with the greatest kindness.

“One Monday morning, I came into the office and found the colliery manager waiting to see me. He said, ‘There is a change in the water—it is going down. It is rumoured that Ince Hall Co. are flooded. They are said to have been cutting a slant drift to turn the water upon us, but it has overcome them and

drowned them out.' I said, 'Surely they have had enough now : they have digged a pit and fallen into it themselves.' But no, they proceeded with the case.

"We still went on driving drifts in the cannell mine. One day two of our colliers, while working, broke through into an open place. They were at once seized by a number of Ince Hall men, taken through the workings, and up their pit shaft into the Ince Hall office. The manager asked them what they had been doing there. They replied that they were working our cannell, but it appeared some one had been there before them.

"The following day, I saw the manager and said to him, 'I hear you took two of our colliers prisoners yesterday. Are you now convinced that you have been trespassing very considerably?' He replied very coolly that he did not know, but if they had they would pay damages.

"They appeared ashamed at being found out at this point, and asked if we could not come to some understanding and have a friendly meeting without the lawyers. We agreed, and the manager and secretary of the Ince Hall Co. met Mr. Marsden and me in a room at the Railway Hotel.

"Before going to the meeting, I said to Mr. Marsden, 'I expect this will be the last attempt. I shall take my New Testament with me.' He laughed and said, 'What will you do with it there?' 'I will try to read a portion of Scripture before we begin.'

"When we got comfortably seated, I said, 'I understand that one of you is a Churchman and the other an Independent.' They admitted this. 'Well then,' I said, 'as this is to be a friendly talk about a settlement, have you any objection to my reading a portion of Scripture before we begin?' They had no objection, so I read Luke xix. 1-10. I said 'I will make no comment. They were silent for some time, and then the manager said, 'But it was three to one that I offered.' I replied, 'That

may be, but we have just read that Zacchæus said if he had taken anything from any man wrongfully he would restore *fourfold*. I think you had better follow his example.' To this they consented. The agreement was drawn up at once, but before signing they wished to consult their lawyers. The lawyers would not consent to the proposed settlement. We heard that the lawyers had a good laugh, and twitted them about following the example of Zacchæus.

"The lawsuit went on for over twelve months after this. At last a verdict was pronounced in our favour with costs.

"Thus ended one of the most unjust and scandalous trials to crush a neighbour by a combination of wealthy Tory Colliery owners that was ever heard of.

"My comfort all the time was that we did not seek improperly or covet this property, but that the matter came before us in the ordinary business way. Holding the view that we are only stewards, and are held accountable for the power God has given to get wealth, it was often my prayer that if we lost the case I might, like my old friend and Christian brother John Caldecott, come away from the court singing, 'Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.'"

The judicial decision in this trial was given on April 21st, 1877, the application for an injunction restraining Mr. Coop and his partner from sinking the shafts being dismissed with costs. By this decision Mr. Coop was now secure in a property which for some time had been in litigation, and was, therefore, of doubtful value. His ordinary business prospered, however, and he at once began to look out for opportunities to make investments for the cause of Christ.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### EXPERIENCES AT HOME AND ON THE CONTINENT.

SOON after the completion of the new church building at the corner of Mornington Road and Derby Road, Southport, at the conclusion of one of the services, the following lines were found on a seat, addressed to Mr. Coop :—

“An infidel has entered into your church, and if you think he is worth saving, or you do not fear him, call at 59, Sussex Road, and enquire for E. Davis.”

Mr. Coop lost no time in calling at the address given. He found Mr. Davis at home, and was cordially received by him. He at once understood the object of Mr. Coop's visit, and they were soon in an earnest conversation together. Mr. Coop gives the following account of their interview :—

“Mr. Davis went on to say he was going past our church, and was induced to go in, and while inside was prompted to write the note he did. I replied that I was glad to see him, and if he was prepared to do me any good I should be very glad to have him do so. He then went on to say, ‘I have been brought up religiously. My father and mother are Methodists, but I

cannot say that I was ever converted, or born again, as you call it. But I have been religiously trained from my youth up. For some time I have been a doubter, or disbeliever, in all religions. Indeed, I became for a time what you call an infidel, or Deist, but finally went into Atheism before I had any rest or peace. I now have rest.' I asked him what kind of rest he now had. I remarked, a person may be at rest when he is asleep, or when he is dead ; but that could not be the kind of rest he meant. I then further asked him if with the rest he now had he could truly say he had peace, joy, and happiness. After a little hesitancy he answered, 'Yes.' I put the question again to him, 'Have you peace and joy in your present rest?' He then gave a very rambling and indefinite reply. I then put the question to him in the following way : 'Have you such a rest and peace and joy and gladness in your present state that you feel called upon to try to bring other persons into the same condition?' He replied, 'Well, I see what you mean, and of course it is only reasonable if I am right myself that I should try to persuade others to accept my position ; but I frankly own that I cannot say that I am altogether right. Nevertheless, if you can show me anything in which I am wrong, or anything that will do me good, I shall be glad to hear you.' I then asked him to tell me as nearly as possible just the nature of his unbelief : was the difficulty in the head or in the heart? I told him the Scriptures said, 'The fool hath said in his *heart* there is no God,' *i.e.*, he wishes it to be so, he is not sure that it is so, but the wish is father of the thought. 'Now how is it with you? Do you want it to be so because of the state of your mind? Are there not some sins you do not wish to give up, rather than that you have honestly and thoroughly investigated the question, and come to the conclusion that the Christian religion is not true?' His reply was, 'Well, I see so many different opinions, so much inconsistency and intolerance, that perhaps these matters



have influenced my mind.' He then went on to tell me that about ten years ago a young man, a companion, had loaned him Paine's *Age of Reason* to read, and at the same time a tract was placed in his hands on the same subject, which professed to quote from Paine's works, but he found the statements in the tract were untrue, and that this had considerable influence in helping him to believe what Paine said. He then wrote to Bradlaugh, who sent him some tracts to read, which finally determined his unbelief. He, nevertheless, expressed a strong desire to be relieved from his present state if I could possibly help him.

"Shortly afterwards I had a second interview with him, and during this interview I presented before him, as best I could, the foundation of the Christian faith, which I declared included the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I asked him if he had ever considered Christianity in reference to its *facts*; and when he informed me that he had never so considered it, but had looked at it mainly from the doctrinal point of view, we then went into the matter somewhat as follows:

"First. We have a document which has been in existence a long time that states the fact of Christ's resurrection.

"Second. This document or book was written by some person or persons.

"Third. Were they good men that wrote it, and at the same time knew that they were writing lies?

"Fourth. Could bad men have written it while the Book itself condemns all wickedness?

"Fifth. How can we account for the preaching of the Gospel at the present time if the fact of the resurrection is untrue?

"Sixth. What brought into practice the observance of the first day of the week instead of any other day?

"These points we carefully considered, and a very decided impression was evidently made upon his mind."

This incident is related as illustrating Mr. Coop's practical method of dealing with sceptics as well as with others. He never spent much time in irrelevant discussion. He seemed to know almost intuitively just what the issue was, and he immediately concentrated all his powers upon one or two vital points. He recognised at once that the resurrection of Christ must be regarded as the citadel of the Christian faith, and, consequently, he rested the whole issue with the infidel upon that single fact. He knew that, if Christ's resurrection could be demonstrated, then everything else would be easy enough. And it will be seen also that, in dealing with this question, he recognised clearly the important antecedent conditions. He found certain records which distinctly asserted this resurrection ; hence, he rightly enough concluded that if the truthfulness of these records could be established then there was no need of trying to prove the fact of the resurrection. This fact was affirmed in the records, and if the records were to be accepted as speaking the truth, then there could be no question any further about the matter.

On April 18th, 1876, Mr. Coop was married to Mrs. Amelia Gandy, of Penketh, near Warrington. On the occasion of this marriage the employés of the firm presented Mr. Coop and his wife with a handsome time-piece and ornaments. The lady he married had a family of four sons, whom she had brought up with great care after the death of her husband. She was

connected with an influential family of Wesleyans, but about the time of her marriage with Mr. Coop she herself was baptized, and afterwards became identified with the church in Mornington Road, of which Mr. Coop was a member. Her four sons were very promising young men, and Mr. Coop took the liveliest interest in the increase of his family. He now had six sons instead of two, and he often spoke of the pride which he felt in these rising young men.

However, his great joy in these regards was not altogether unclouded. Misunderstandings and other evils began to manifest themselves among the members of the church, and as the four young men recently added to Mr. Coop's family were not members of the church at Mornington Road, but still held to their Wesleyan principles, their presence at the meetings became a source of irritation to some of the church members. This fact, added to other disagreeable matters, finally brought about a somewhat unpleasant state of things between a few members and Mr. Coop; and as he was the only pastor of the church, and was subsequently frequently absent for considerable periods travelling, things continued to grow worse rather than better.

Indeed, these troubles were among the most trying of Mr. Coop's life. He was devoted to the church, and the church in the main was heartily devoted to him. But on account of his absence the management of affairs largely fell into other hands, and whether this manage-

ment was wise or unwise, it was often such as did not meet with Mr. Coop's approval. A few members of the church were evidently somewhat influenced by Mr. Coop's attitude towards the action of the Annual Meeting with reference to American evangelists. He was believed by some to be practically an Open Communionist, and as several members of the church sympathised heartily with the Close Communion views expressed in the action of the Annual Meetings at Leicester and Nottingham, this fact did not help to throw oil on the troubled waters. In view of this feeling, Mr. Coop deemed it necessary to state explicitly his views on the Communion question to the church. And on one occasion he read the following statement :—

“DEAR BRETHREN,—I am sorry to find that in various places and in some churches there seems to be an impression that I am an advocate of Open Communion, and that the unhappy confusion and disorder in this church is at least partly a consequence of my being so. This is not true. I have, therefore, decided to put before you a statement of my sincere convictions on this important matter.

“So far, I have held my opinions as private property.

“I may then state that my views are in perfect accordance with those of the brotherhood in England and America on the question of Communion, *i.e.*, that all baptized believers, who are at the same time walking in the fear of the Lord, are proper subjects to commune at the Lord's Table. But I do not think the Spirit of Christ, as it is revealed to us in the New Testament, so full of love towards all, leaves me at liberty in this day of confusion and division to regard *all* unimmersed believers as

absolutely aliens from the family of God. And, therefore, I do not think that I am at liberty to *debar* from all communion any truly spiritually minded believers who, on account of various unhappy reasons, do not see the whole truth on this matter, but who on their own responsibility take the bread and wine.

“Holding these views, whilst I cannot *invite* any unbaptized persons to commune, on the same general ground I cannot conscientiously *debar* them, but leave the whole responsibility with them.”

At the conclusion of the reading he sat down without making a single word of comment. There was a solemn silence for some time, and then the meeting proceeded as usual, no one making any reference to the letter which had been read. However, at the close of the meeting many of the brethren met in groups, and talked the matter over in a very friendly manner, most of them evidently approving of the views set forth in the communication, while some went so far as to urge upon Mr. Coop its publication in the papers. Indeed, Mr. Coop's position on the Communion question was practically shared in by very many members of the church at Mornington Road, while his faith was very strong that the churches generally were practically on his lines, had it been possible to secure an honest expression of their judgment.

About this time Mr. Coop's health was not very firm, and he decided to make a tour through the Continent. On this tour he was accompanied by his wife, her eldest son, John Robert, his own sons Joe and Frank, and his niece Miss Coop. His visit to Rome at this time was of

considerable interest. On the first Lord's Day after his arrival there, he went out to see if he could find some place where worship was held in English. He soon found a young man giving out handbills, and finding that he could speak English, Mr. Coop learned from him that his name was Landels, and that he was the son of Dr. Landels, then pastor of Regent's Park Baptist Church, London. The bills he was distributing were with respect to a mission carried on by the Rev. James Wall, formerly a Baptist minister in England, who had been labouring in Rome and vicinity for a number of years. He said they had a small Sunday-school, the service of which would close in a few minutes, and afterwards a public service would be held. He invited Mr. Coop and friends to attend, and assured them that they would be heartily welcomed at the service.

Mr. Coop was delighted. After the school closed, the Table was spread with the bread and wine. This at once made him feel at home. With him the Lord's Supper had been for years the most important part of the Lord's Day services. Indeed, with him so prominent a place did this hold in the service, that he felt the Lord's Day was but poorly spent, however much preaching he might have heard, if he had not been permitted to sit down at the Lord's Table, where he could show the Lord's death and sufferings. Holding these views, the sight of the emblems at once brought him into active sympathy with the meeting. The service was conducted

in the Italian language by a pastor, Mr. Wall himself being absent, preaching at some other point.

However, while Mr. Coop could not understand the language, he read in the emblems before him everything that was necessary to his spiritual enjoyment. He was interested, furthermore, in the fact that several persons took part in the meeting. These were all native Italians, and they seemed to enter very heartily into the service, and to speak apparently to the edification of those present. This also reminded Mr. Coop of home. He noticed that the service was very similar to what he had been accustomed to, and he was very much impressed with the simplicity and scriptural character of the worship.

Two things had always been cardinal points in Mr. Coop's religious principles. The Lord's Supper on the first day of every week was regarded by him as indispensable, not only in order to reproduce apostolic example, but also in order to the development of spiritual power. He felt that the observance of this Supper was just as necessary in order to spiritual growth as the ordinary meal is necessary to physical growth. He also believed heartily in an orderly mutual edification meeting. He did not believe in any extreme view of this matter. Nevertheless he believed that the *principle* of the Church "edifying itself in love" was clearly taught in the New Testament, and that wherever different members of the church could profitably take part in the public meetings

this should be encouraged. He did not think that the whole body was a *tongue*, and, therefore, he had no such idea as that *every* member should speak in the public assembly. Indeed, he found in the very chapters to which the advocates of mutual teaching referred in order to establish their practice, that many other things were done by the members besides teaching, and that each person acted according to the particular gift with which he was endowed. Hence, Mr. Coop did not carry his mutual teaching to the extremes which some have carried it to. He saw that the body was made up of different members, and that these members had not the same office, and, consequently, he came to the wise conclusion that if all the members of the body gave themselves to speaking, then there would be no place for the exercise of any other gift, and, as a result, no part of the body would be of any use except the tongue.

Nevertheless, he believed that the tongue was an important member of the body, and that at the public meetings this should have opportunity for legitimate exercise ; and he did not see why two or three members might not very properly occupy the time, rather than to have it wholly occupied by one person. He thought that this plan gave variety, and often was more edifying than a somewhat prosy address by a single individual. But even as regards this contention, Mr. Coop was not extreme in the latter years of his life. He felt that much depended upon the circumstances of the case. If there was one



person who was especially qualified to speak, and others who were not, it was always better to let the speaking be done by one man who could do it well, than by half-a-dozen who did it without edification. Indeed, he believed that the whole matter should be governed by the apostolic injunction, viz., "everything should be done decently and in order," and "to edification."

It should be stated, however, that there was involved in this question much which Mr. Coop regarded as of supreme importance. While he believed in "mutual teaching" at the meetings of the brethren, with the limitations which have been stated, he felt that the principle did not hold good in preaching the Gospel to the world. His notion was that successful evangelistic labours could only be expected when men specially qualified for the work were employed. This was one reason why he was so anxious to secure evangelists from America. He felt that the efforts of his brethren in this country to evangelise the people by uneducated men, who could give very little of their time to special religious work, and who had not the ability to gain and hold the attention of large congregations, could not possibly succeed in doing the work which was needed to be done. Hence, in the latter years of his life, he himself gave up the notion that any evangelistic work worthy of the name could be accomplished in this country through the agencies which had been largely employed in the years that were passed.

He very earnestly called attention to the difference between edifying the church members and preaching the Gospel. In other words, he insisted upon the clear distinction which is made in the commission given by Christ to His apostles. In this commission, Mr. Coop contended, the duty of *making disciples* was a very different thing from *teaching* them after they were made. He held to the notion that only specially qualified men could be eminently successful in discipling the nations, but when persons had become disciples they might edify one another in meetings appointed for that purpose. He had no objection, therefore, to the practice of "mutual teaching" under proper restrictions, when this teaching was confined solely to meetings where only *brethren* were present ; but he very strongly objected to the notion that brethren generally might be useful or acceptable as speakers when the congregations were of a mixed character, such as usually attended the Lord's Day services.

He saw, in common with others, the difficulty of meeting the whole case. He saw danger on both sides of the question. On one side there was the danger of unqualified persons taking part, while on the other, there was the danger of what has been<sup>2</sup> called "the one man system." Mr. Coop recognised that the Scriptures clearly taught a *plurality* of pastors, bishops, or elders over every congregation, and that one of the qualifications of these was that they should be "apt to *teach*," and, therefore,

competent to edify the church members ; but he did not recognise that these pastors, bishops, or elders were necessarily competent to *preach* the Gospel with power to the unconverted. He recognised the scriptural distinction between *teaching* and *preaching*, and felt that in the Lord's Day services there ought to be some arrangement by which this distinction should be clearly maintained.

However, he was not blind to the fact that the present state of religious society stood greatly in the way of making this scriptural distinction perfectly clear. He saw that while all the other churches and chapels conducted their services in the usual way, it would be very difficult to change the order of things in those churches in which he was specially interested. Indeed, as a practical matter, "mutual teaching" had been thoroughly tested, as well as preaching the Gospel, by those who had not the special qualifications which Mr. Coop thought necessary ; and both of these tests had proved to be quite unsatisfactory. Hence, while the matter of American evangelists had always been almost a hobby with him, in the latter part of his life it became a prime necessity, so far as the work in this country was concerned. He saw nothing else that promised success, though this view of the matter did not in the least change his interest in a meeting conducted on the style of the one he attended at Mr. Wall's mission in Rome.

Consequently, when he found the services at Mr. Wall's mission so entirely in harmony with his own con-

victions, he was greatly attracted to the mission, and as soon as the service closed he began to make some enquiries concerning its prospects. The needed information was supplied by Mrs. Wall, and at the close of their conference she invited Mr. Coop to attend one of her "Beggars' Meetings," which she held on Wednesday afternoons in another part of the city. Mr. Coop went to this meeting, and on approaching the place he heard them singing very heartily. When he entered the room he found it almost impossible to endure the bad atmosphere, and wondered how it was possible for Mrs. Wall, who was conducting the meeting, to remain in the room. She was standing on the platform, and before her was a congregation of about two hundred professional beggars, lame, halt, and blind,—reminding Mr. Coop somewhat of the groups he had gathered at his "scriptural feasts," though evidently of a much lower order than any he had ever seen before.

Mrs. Wall's method was to teach each one to commit to memory a portion of the Word of God, and a verse out of Moody and Sankey's hymn book ; after which she gave them an earnest exhortation, and closed the service with prayer. But before leaving the room, each one was given a loaf of bread, valued at three-halfpence. Mr. Coop thought this was the Lord's plan to carry on missionary work. He remembered that Christ came feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and generally administering to the needs of the body as well as the

soul. He felt impressed by the whole service, and was moved to help in the work.

On leaving this room, Mr. Wall proposed to take Mr. Coop to look at some sites he was thinking of trying to get hold of, in view of the fact that he was fearful he would have to give up his present premises. One of these he seemed very anxious to buy, but had not the cash with which to buy it. Mr. Coop was deeply interested in the matter, and promised to give it prayerful attention, and then report to Mr. Wall what he would do. After his return home he sent Mr. Wall a cheque for £100, which became the nucleus for the building of a chapel which cost £1,500. Mr. Coop's was the first subscription received, and when he visited Rome again, two years later, Mr. Wall introduced him to the new chapel, and thanked him very heartily for the £100, which was an encouragement to others to give, until the whole amount had been provided and the chapel built.

On November 8th, 1877, Mr. Coop's eldest son, Mr. Joe, came of age, and this was the occasion of an excursion of the employés of Messrs. Coop & Co. to Southport, where a suitable repast was provided and a meeting held. A special train left Wigan about ten o'clock in the morning, conveying some nine hundred persons, who took part in the day's celebration. About three o'clock in the afternoon a substantial meal was provided in the Cambridge Hall, the tables being profusely decorated with choice plants. Mr. T. Coop and family,

with a large number of friends, occupied the platform. At the conclusion of the meal, Mr. Coop took the chair, and the proceedings were opened by the whole assembly singing "Precious Jewels." He addressed them as "Fellow-workmen," which he considered the highest title he could give them. They should remember that in the good old Book they could read of the dignity and honour which the Son of God had placed on work. The reason they had gathered together was because they had been co-workers for a great many years. He had been thinking of the many hands that had been in the employ of the firm, and he was glad to remember that during the past thirty years there had existed between employer and employed such a friendly spirit that there had never been an occasion for an appeal to the magistrates.

After this came a number of testimonials to Mr. Joe, with hearty congratulations and expressions of satisfaction with his conduct in the somewhat difficult relations of fellow-worker and son of the head of the firm.

All this was responded to in a short but feeling address by Mr. Joe Coop. This closed a very happy and auspicious occasion—one which had given the father quite as much pleasure as the son, and one, too, in which all the employés of Coop & Co. had taken the most lively interest. And this occasion furnishes but an illustration of the cordial sympathy that has always existed between the members of the firm and their employés. Even up to the present time, it can

be truthfully said that no firm in the country has maintained the confidence of those employed more than has the firm of Coop & Co. Though very many strikes have taken place in Lancashire, and not a few in Wigan, there has never yet been any strike among the employés of this firm. With the early introduction of machinery a *few* were disaffected for a short time, but the difficulty was soon arranged ; and even this was not dissatisfaction with the firm, but jealousy of the machinery. This fact of itself speaks volumes for the manner in which the business is conducted.

The year 1878 opened with considerable gloom. The Government seemed inclined to go to war on account of the conflict between Turkey and Russia ; and this fact, together with other disturbing causes, gave considerable unsteadiness in business circles. However, Mr. Coop's business had been for some time constantly increasing, and there was no diminution at this time. He had now accumulated a very considerable sum of surplus cash, and he was more than ever anxious to use this in the Lord's work. As has already been noted, he had hoped to contribute liberally to this end through the Evangelist Fund of the churches with which he was associated ; but since the Leicester meeting of 1872 he had been almost without hope that anything commensurate with the needs of the cause would be undertaken by the churches. He, therefore, determined to try to do something through another channel. As

his own health was growing feeble, he did not feel at liberty to burden himself with the details of evangelistic operations, but was more than willing to contribute liberally to the support of such operations, if he could find some responsible persons or organisation to undertake the practical oversight of the matter.

Reference has already been made to Mr. Earl's work at Southampton, and Mr. Coop's enthusiastic interest in that work. Another evangelist also came from America under the direction of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society. This evangelist, Mr. M. D. Todd, located at Chester, and began a work there which soon attracted considerable attention. But his presence seemed to be an offence to some of the brethren with whom Mr. Coop was identified, and this feeling served to intensify the differences between Mr. Coop and his brethren. He did not hesitate to express his sympathy with both Mr. Earl and Mr. Todd, and he furthermore gave practical evidence of this sympathy by visiting them, and offering some assistance in their work. Though he had had nothing to do primarily in bringing these two evangelists to this country, he did not conceal his gratification that they had come, and especially as they were meeting with such encouraging success.

It ought to be stated just here that at first it was no part of the plan of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society (which first proposed to assist Mr. Earl) to make England in any important sense a field for missionary



enterprise. Doubtless, Mr. Earl would never have received an appointment to this field at all, had it not been that he had already decided to labour in England when he visited the convention at Louisville at the time the society was formed, and when his appointment was made. But after he had begun work here, and had met with such signal success, he urged the society to send at least another man, to help in giving a practical illustration of what could be really accomplished by wise and energetic methods. The society willingly sent Mr. Todd, but had little thought then of increasing its evangelistic forces in this country. Nor did the society at this time suppose that the presence of these evangelists in England would be regarded by brethren here as an offence, though the society was not ignorant of the fact that some of the English brethren differed from the American brethren on a few questions.

However, as Mr. Coop was now convinced that he could not work through the old Evangelist Committee, and as he was also now convinced of the practicability of accomplishing something worthy of the cause through the aid of American evangelists, he determined to make an earnest effort to enlist the sympathies of the American society still more in evangelistic efforts in this country. Consequently, in company with his wife, his son Frank, and Miss Haigh of Southport, he set out for America in the spring of 1878, mainly with a view of seeing what could be done in the way of securing a further

supply of evangelists through the Foreign Christian Missionary Society.

When Mr. Coop arrived at Cincinnati, the headquarters of the society, he sought the privilege of stating his case before the Executive Board. Accordingly, a meeting was called for this purpose, and Mr. Coop occupied considerable time in detailing the history of the religious movement with which he was identified, the interest which he felt in securing success, and the means which he thought were necessary in order to success. He explained how for years the brethren in England had sought to obtain the services of American evangelists, and how from time to time their efforts to secure these had more or less failed. He then referred to the work which was being accomplished by Mr. Earl and Mr. Todd, and, finally, closed by offering to add £1,000 to every £2,000 the society would contribute towards supporting evangelists in his native country. Mr. Coop's appeal was made in the most impressive manner, and at the close of his address there were tears in the eyes of nearly every member of the Executive Board.

The President of the Board made a brief response. He frankly stated that it was no part of the plan of their society to work in England, but owing to what they had been informed was the general desire on the part of the brethren in England to have help from America, the society had at first proposed to assist Mr. Earl, and then, at further earnest solicitation, Mr. Todd had been sent

over also to help in the work. However, it was then not their purpose to extend their operations in England ; but as Mr. Coop's appeal had been so earnest, and withal had been backed up with such a liberal proposition, he thought it probable the Board would consider the matter favourably, and, if suitable men could be obtained, at least two or three more evangelists might be sent to England.

This closed the conference. But one of the members of the Board, who at that time had charge of a large and influential church, was so impressed by Mr. Coop's appeal, and the apparent needs of the English field, that he at once declared his readiness to resign his charge and go to England with him, if no one else suitable could be obtained. Mr. Coop was greatly touched by this proposal, as he could not understand how any one in the position of the brother mentioned could make such a sacrifice as would be involved. However, after a few days this brother did decide to go, though at that time Mr. Coop had gone on to Colorado, and was then stopping at Denver City. While there he received a telegram, stating that the brother mentioned had already secured his passage in the steamship *Adriatic*, and would sail on August 3rd for England. Mr. Coop immediately telegraphed to secure berths for himself and family on the same steamer.

It will be seen, by the foregoing facts, precisely how the movement began in this country which so decidedly absorbed the attention of Mr. Coop during the latter part of his life.

On returning from America, Mr. Coop found that the difficulties in the Southport church had not diminished during his absence. The evangelist who had come over with him, after going to London and several other places, finally decided to open services in the Cambridge Hall, Southport, but before doing so gave notice to the church in Southport of his intention, and cordially asked the church's co-operation. However, the evangelist very soon became acquainted with some of the facts in connection with the troubles of the church, and wisely, as he thought, kept aloof as much as possible from all the parties concerned. The difficulties, nevertheless, weighed upon Mr. Coop's mind. He was by no means well, and the more he thought about the troubles the feebler his health became.

And now the most painful period of his whole life has been reached. It should be stated that at this time the property, which had once been occupied by the brethren in Sussex Road, was still practically owned by Mr. Coop, as he held a mortgage on it for about £300. He had also advanced the larger portion of the money for the building of the church in Mornington Road, where the brethren at this time were meeting.

It seems that there was some arrangement by which the church was to pay rent to Mr. Coop until the money which he had advanced was repaid. But several years having elapsed without his receiving any rent, and the difficulties increasing, Mr. Coop thought that it would

be better to have a division of the church property in an equitable manner, and thus relieve both sides from a pressure which had at last become difficult to bear. In this view of the matter the members of the church, who were regarded as opposed to Mr. Coop, fully agreed, though the terms of settlement remained in dispute for some considerable time. At last the American evangelist referred to was called in by both parties, and consulted as to the best course to pursue. He advised a peaceful division of the property, as this had already been practically agreed upon by the parties concerned, though the terms of the agreement had not been definitely settled. At a subsequent meeting with the officers of the church, the following terms were unanimously adopted :—

“Agreed, That the church shall be recommended to remove to Sussex Road property on the following terms, viz.,

“The Sussex Road property shall be handed to the church free from all incumbrances, together with one hundred pounds sterling, and all the furniture, etc., originally belonging to the Sussex Road property, together with the library in the school-room in Mornington Road; the church relinquishing all claims upon the Mornington Road property. That, provided the church agrees to accept this agreement, we recommend that it shall take effect from November 1st, 1878.

“Dated this first day of October, 1878.”

This recommendation was signed by all the officers of the church, and also the evangelist who was acting for Mr. Coop, Mr. Coop himself being ill at the time, and,

therefore, unable to attend the conference. A meeting of the whole church was now called to consider the foregoing proposition, and after fully discussing the matter it was practically unanimously adopted.

It is proper, however, to state that there was one condition clearly stipulated by the American evangelist, and agreed to by the officers, which is not written in the agreement, but which was witnessed by the gentleman who was then acting as the evangelist for the church. This unwritten agreement provided for the granting of letters of honourable dismissal by the church to all persons asking for the same. This provision was made in view of the probable fact that another church would be organised at Mornington Road after the removal to Sussex Road was accomplished ; and it was furthermore probable that in such an event several members of the church would wish to be transferred to the new organisation. And the evangelist acting for Mr. Coop would not consent to even an appearance of unfriendly separation, and, consequently, insisted upon an understanding such as has been stated.

In this view of the matter he was heartily supported by Mr. Coop ; for while Mr. Coop felt greatly aggrieved at some of his brethren, on account of what he considered unreasonable opposition to him, he, nevertheless, would not willingly become a party to any arrangement that did not recognise brotherly fellowship. Hence, it was on a distinct understanding that brotherly letters of transfer

should be given that the agreement was signed for the division of property.

It was just at this point where new difficulties began. It was not long until arrangements were made for starting another church at Mornington Road, and as a large number of persons in the church that had moved to Sussex Road sympathised with Mr. Coop, some of these at once asked for their letters; and, according to the understanding, these letters were readily granted. But soon after this, when several others applied, their application was refused. This refusal at once precipitated a conflict which became widespread in its influence, and was largely maintained by misunderstandings and misrepresentations.

It would be easy enough to vindicate Mr. Coop by an appeal to the facts and documents which are available in this matter, but to do justice to his memory would require a detailed account which would occupy very considerable space; while, if the facts are faithfully stated, injustice might be done to others where none is intended. It is thought, therefore, best to pass over this whole incident by simply saying that, before Mr. Coop's death, he and the parties with whom he was in conflict became reconciled, and the fellowship which had for a time been practically broken between himself and certain brethren in Southport and Wigan was completely restored. And it should be furthermore stated that, since his death, a brotherly conference was held, at which the conduct of the evangelist who assisted Mr. Coop and the church at

Southport in the division of the church property was carefully considered, and the unanimous decision arrived at that the evangelist was in no way directly to blame for any real or apparent schism which may have for a time existed. With these simple statements it is deemed best to bury what was for some years a source of great pain to many in that oblivion where such things rightfully belong, and which is best secured by the silence which is now drawn over them.

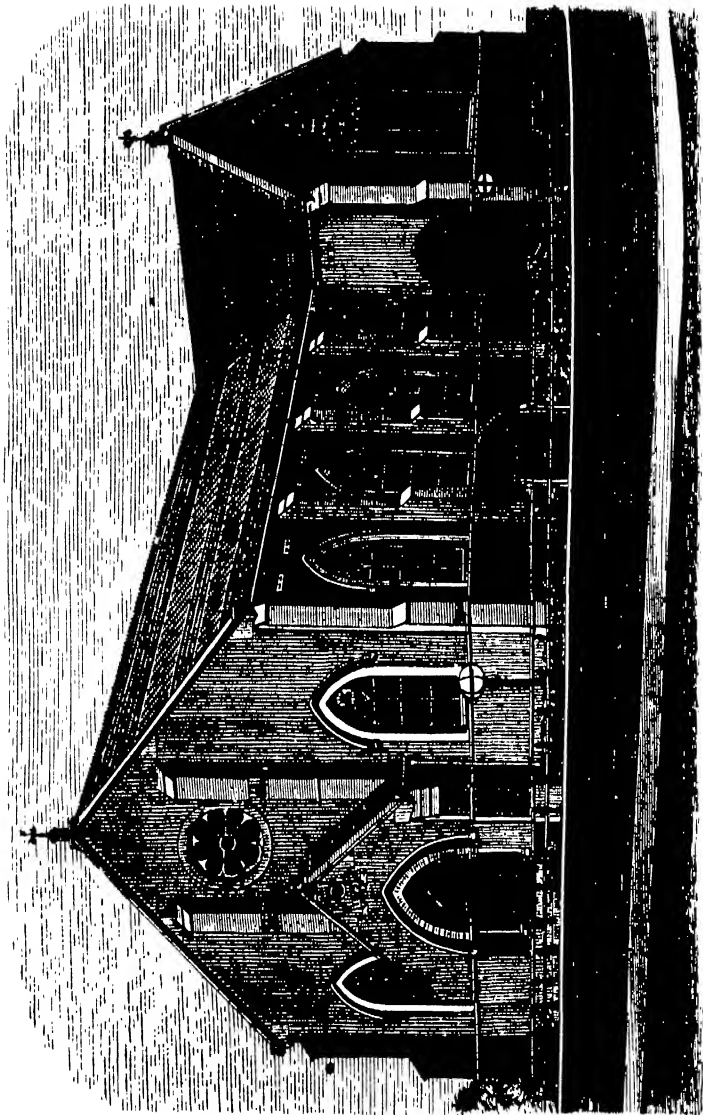


## CHAPTER XVIII.

### BEGINNING A NEW MOVEMENT.

AFTER the Mornington Road property came solely into the hands of Mr. Coop, it was closed for some time in order to make some necessary repairs and decorations. These changes cost a considerable sum, amounting to about £200, and finally, after the premises were put into thoroughly good order, a church was organised, and opening services were held during the last week of November 1878. At these services Mr. Coop formally made over the property, estimated to be worth about £3,000, to trustees to be held for the use of the church.

At the public meeting on this occasion the minister of the Houghton Street Baptist Chapel presided, and addresses were made by several persons, including one by Mr. Coop. The number of members enrolled was about thirty, some of these being the result of the labours of the American evangelist at the Cambridge Hall. And as the labours of this evangelist from this time became identified with the church, as well as the meetings at the Hall, it may be well to quote the address which he delivered at the opening of the church, as this address



MORNINGTON ROAD CHURCH, SOUTHPORT.



clearly states the principles and aims of the new movement. The address was as follows :—

“THE PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF THE NEW MOVEMENT.

“This will always be an interesting occasion in the memory of some who are gathered here. It will mark the beginning of a united effort on the part of a few earnest disciples of Christ to work for the salvation of souls on a basis somewhat different from that occupied by any other religious people in the town. And as I will, for a time at least, be intimately identified with the movement proposed, it seems to me proper that I should state frankly the origin of this meeting, and what is intended to be accomplished by it.

“Recently several persons have expressed a desire to form a Church in harmony with the principles set forth in my public discourses at the Cambridge Hall ; and in order that I might have a more efficient co-operation in carrying forward my work, I have considered this proposition with much favour. I have felt that while I had the sympathy of the general public to a large extent, I had no organised band of workers to whom I could look for any assistance whatever. Hence I have felt greatly interested in the proposition that would place at my disposal an earnest band of Christian workers who are willing to consecrate themselves to the purposes for which I myself have been labouring ; and when the munificent proposal of your esteemed citizen, Mr. Timothy Coop, was added to the considerations already mentioned, I no longer hesitated, in giving my hearty encouragement to the organisation of a Church, whose principles are simply but explicitly declared in the Apostle’s comprehensive summary : ‘There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.’

“And as it is proposed to commence here the organisation of such a body of Christians immediately, I have thought it proper to give a somewhat detailed and formal statement of the faith and practice to which we hold, so that the public may be fully informed as to what we propose to be and to do.

“I think it will be generally conceded by all earnest, thinking Christians, that we are not making as rapid progress in the conversion of the world to Christ as is commensurate with the grave importance of the work to be done, and the weighty responsibility of our relations to it. Everywhere there is a profound conviction that something is wrong in the present state of Christendom. While it is conceded that much has been accomplished, it cannot be successfully denied that the work of rescuing the perishing is hastening far too leisurely.

“What are the difficulties in the way of a more successful prosecution of the great work committed to our hands? Can we determine these with something like definite certainty? And having found them out, can we apply the proper remedy? Let us look at this matter with entire candour. Let us enter upon the investigation with the single purpose to know the truth, and to walk in its light whithersoever it may lead us. Let us as far as possible divest ourselves of every prejudice, and with willing hearts bring ourselves to the feet of the Master, and ask for such guidance as will lead us into all truth.

“Let me, then, briefly call your attention to some of the greatest needs of the present hour, without supplying which it seems to me the consummation of the world's deliverance from sin must be postponed indefinitely. •

“1. The first and perhaps greatest need is Christian unity. I say Christian *unity*, because this is much more important than Christian *union*, and is not so likely to be realised. It is quite possible to form a union of Christians or churches which is not at all desirable. There might be union without unity, and it is

by no means certain that this would be an improvement upon the present divided and to some extent distracted state of Christendom. Unity must precede any union worthy of the name. Hence it is for Christian unity that we must labour, for it was for this the Saviour prayed when He said, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me' (John xvii. 20, 21).

"2. A second great need is certainty or assurance in our Christian life. Whoever will take the trouble to enquire of a number of persons, belonging to the various religious parties, will find that there is a sad lack among these persons of anything like a definite and well-defined religious hope. Each one will tell you that he is deeply concerned about his soul's salvation, but cannot speak with any certainty as to his present state, or as to the final outcome of the struggle. Everywhere there is unrest. Everywhere there is doubt and uncertainty. And this is more decidedly true of the Protestant churches than of the Catholic. The Romanist may be altogether wrong in his position, but he has at least one advantage, he has something clearly defined to which he can fasten his faith. And this gives him assurance, where the Protestant meets only perplexing doubts and dimly defined realities. Hence the chief weakness of Protestantism to-day is that it has nothing settled and certain to offer the people upon which they can without a doubt rest their weary souls.

"True, Protestantism has pretended to oppose an infallible Church with an infallible Bible, but Protestantism has constantly stultified this plea by requiring an almost indefinite number of human creeds in addition to the Bible. And then, while contending for the freedom of conscience and the right of individual interpretation, Protestants have assumed a position little less tyrannical than that of the Catholics; and as it adds doubt

and perplexity where the Catholic has certainty and rest, it is surely worth while that earnest Protestants should seek to relieve themselves of that which is clearly not worthy of the great plea which they make for the restoration of the Church to the simplicity and purity of apostolic times. The most certain road to success is certainty. All other things being equal, the Church that adopts the infallible creed will be immeasurably the strongest. Especially in religion, the human mind requires something upon which it can infallibly rest, and any doubt in reference to the creed is always an element of weakness.

“The Roman Catholic Church, seizing the idea of infallibility, has steadily clung to it through all ages of its history with a tenacity which clearly demonstrates its estimate of this dogma as an element of success. And if Protestantism would ever succeed, commensurate with its grand and lofty purposes, it must present to the world something more certain than its present limping, halting, hesitating articles of faith. It must have something better than what is too often the practical import of Protestant teaching: ‘You can and you can’t; you shall and you sha’n’t; you will and you won’t; you’ll be damned if you do, and be damned if you don’t.’

“3. Still another great need is religious enthusiasm. It seems to me that the fire of the primitive Church has largely died out. Here and there we find exceptional cases. Sometimes we meet with churches as well as persons whose piety, whose earnestness, and whose sacrificing devotion seem somewhat equal to the real necessities of the case. But, speaking in general terms, it cannot be doubted that religious life has become too formal, too cold, too much conformed to this world. There is not enough of that transforming spirit which places the child of God in rapturous communion with the Divine Master, and in joyful sympathy with the deep earnestness expressed by the Apostle Paul in these beautiful and touching words, ‘I count all

things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.'

"Here is the spirit that is needed. This is the practical Christian life demanded by this active, restless, turbulent age. And until the enthusiasm of the followers of Christ shall at least approximate to the enthusiasm of the primitive disciples, vain indeed are all our hopes in reference to the conversion of the world to Christ.

"Having now briefly noticed some of the things most needed, we come next to inquire: Is it possible to supply these things, in at least such measure as will greatly augment the success of the work committed to our hands?

"As regards Christian Unity. We have already seen that this is greatly needed. How is it possible to realise that for which the Saviour so earnestly prayed, and which is so frequently enjoined upon us by the teachings of the Apostles? I may as well say just here that I believe Christian unity is not only possible, but is absolutely essential, in order that the world may believe that Christ was sent of the Father. But I wish, at the same time, to emphasize the statement that I have no sort of faith that this unity will come by fighting over the differences which have so long and so unhappily engaged the attention of the professed followers of Christ. While it is not disputed that some of these differences involve matters of great importance, it is by no means certain that they are worth what it has cost the cause of Christ to maintain them.



“Is it not possible, then, to find a common ground, one to which all can agree, and leave all these differences to be settled—if ever settled at all—until the work of saving souls has been thoroughly accomplished? In other words, do not Christians generally hold to enough of the same truths to furnish a platform where all earnest workers may stand? This is precisely what I believe, and this is what I wish the people who unite with me here in my work to represent before the world.

“Let me now call your attention more specifically to what I propose:—

“First: I propose that we shall take the Holy Scriptures as our rule of faith and practice. Now, I hold that this is common ground, or ground upon which all may stand together. There is no controversy with any religious people claiming at all to be evangelical, as regards this proposition. But the controversy begins the very moment we propose to take something else as a rule of faith and practice. We are all at one as long as we confine ourselves to the Word of God; but the very moment we begin to formulate our faith in human language, and ask others to accept of our deliverances, that very moment do we precipitate a controversy which must always end, as it has done in the past, in schisms, strifes, and contentions, rather than in ‘keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’

“Now, it seems to me that the first step towards Christian unity is to surrender the authority of human creeds, and to accept heartily of what the Holy Spirit has spoken as our only rule of faith and practice. This constitutes, one of the chief things for which this church will contend. Hence we will have no controversy with men as to whether this or that human creed is to not be referred. We repudiate all alike, not because one is better than the other, but because none are needed, and because all are joyful s, principle and schismatical in their tendencies. We Apostle occupy simply the ground which everybody agrees is

right, and about which there is no controversy whatever. And in doing so, we feel assured that our position will commend itself to all who prefer the Christianity of the New Testament to the denominationalism of human creeds.

“Second : We choose to be collectively called Church of Christ, or Church of God. These are scriptural titles about which there is no controversy, and to which there can be no reasonable objections. Not so, however, of denominational names ; underlying the unscriptural phrases ‘ Church of England,’ ‘ Presbyterian Church,’ ‘ Methodist Church,’ ‘ Baptist Church,’ ‘ Congregational Church,’ ‘ Lutheran Church,’ etc., etc., there is the germ of endless discord and contention. Each one of these churches will contend earnestly for its peculiar name, and will utterly refuse to give it up for either of the other names. But all of these claim to be Churches of Christ. Why not stop at that point ? Why not rest satisfied with what the Bible teaches ? But you say there are differences. But why add a name to intensify these ? Why canonise these differences by human prefixes and suffixes to the Church ? Why not accept the name which all agree to, and especially since this is sanctioned by the Word of God ?

“Now, we claim that if Christian unity ever comes, it must be by emphasizing points of agreement rather than points of difference. This is precisely what we propose in our present movement. We do not wish controversy with anyone. Hence we prefer to call the Church by its simple New Testament name.

“Third : Individually, we propose to call ourselves Christians, though we do not object to any other scriptural title, as ‘ Disciples,’ ‘ Children of God,’ ‘ Saints,’ etc. ; but as the term Christian is scriptural, and the one now most generally in use, we prefer to take that, as it is the name which would likely be most generally preferred. You ask an Episcopalian if he is a Presbyterian, and he will tell you nay. Nor is this all. If you ask the Presbyterian

if he is an Episcopalian, he will answer in precisely the same way. But ask them both if they are Christians, and they will answer that they are ; and if you were for a moment to call in question this fact, they would feel greatly grieved at your conduct.

“ The Methodist is not grieved when he is not called a Baptist ; nor is the Baptist disturbed if you do not call him a Methodist ; but both of these will claim always and everywhere that they are Christians. Very well then, what is the use of having a controversy about that which is not vital ? If these sectarian names only intensify and make more prominent differences which ought not to exist, surely it is high time that these names were abandoned for the name which now all virtually claim, and which all might wear, as it specially honours Him of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. But no matter what others may do. As for myself, I am quite satisfied with the simple but expressive title by which the disciples of Jesus were called in the primitive age of the Church ; and in contending for this name I claim that I am not only acting in harmony with the Word of God, but also in harmony with the plea for Christian unity which I am now making.

“ Fourth : You say that all this is very well, but that there are some vital things concerning which it is impossible to have unity ; and you at once instance baptism as an illustration of what you mean. You say that earnest religious people differ in respect to the subject, action, and design of baptism, and that this difference is frequently so radical that it is simply impossible to hope for reconciliation. Now I am not aiming to discuss the differences that have arisen upon this subject. My position is that we cannot have unity by any such discussion, and furthermore that if we properly understand what is vital, and are willing to consult the best interests of the cause of the Redeemer, there is really no need for any such discussion as usually grows out of these different views concerning baptism. We need only to

find a common ground, a position broad enough for all to stand on, and which at the same time has the unmistakable sanction of Divine authority.

“Can such a position be found, and is it within the reach of all? Let us lay aside every prejudice while we attempt to honestly answer these questions. In reference to the subject of baptism, let me ask what is the real difficulty? Is it concerning believers’ baptism? Surely not, for no one disputes that penitent believers are proper subjects of baptism. Baptists and Pedobaptists, Greeks and Latins, Romanists and Protestants alike hold that believers’ baptism, or (as it is sometimes improperly called) adult baptism, is all right, but some of these hold that infant baptism is proper also; and just here is where the controversy begins. It is this ‘also’ that makes the difference. A large number of Christians do not believe in infant baptism at all, and will not recognise it on any account whatever. Hence it seems to me that this question can be best settled by leaving off that which is in dispute, and by practising that only which all agree is proper and right.

“Precisely the same line of argument will bring unity in regard to the action of baptism. There is no controversy about immersion. All agree that it is valid. The controversy is about sprinkling and pouring. These are seriously questioned by a large portion of the Christian world. Now, how shall we reach unity upon a question which has so long divided the followers of Christ? Shall we keep up the old discussion, or shall we rest satisfied with a common ground which is accessible to all, and within the sphere of whose catholicity no discord can enter?

“I cannot answer for others, but so far as I am personally concerned I will not practise that which needlessly destroys the unity of the children of God. I do not discuss the question upon its scriptural merits. So far as immersion is concerned there is no reason for discussion, and, even admitting that sprinkling or

pouring is valid baptism, I will not practise either, for the following reasons.

“1. There is no need to do so, since immersion will answer as well.

“2. I ought not to do so, as such practice will necessarily produce division among the followers of Christ.

“3. I cannot do so, because I am pleading for a practical basis, where all who love the Lord may heartily stand together.

“And now, if we consider the design of baptism, it is by no means difficult to come to a general agreement. No matter what may be our theories, there ought to be no practical difference among those who hold to baptism at all. All agree that the command to be baptized should be obeyed; and this seems to me to be quite sufficient for practical purposes.

“One believes that his sins are pardoned before baptism; another believes that baptism is one of the conditions upon which he receives pardon. Now, if I insist upon baptism in every case of conversion, I do no more than is believed to be right by everybody who practises baptism at all. But if I should stop short of the baptism, then I would interpose a practical difficulty in the way of Christian unity. But by insisting upon the observance of the ordinance, I find myself again upon that broad and liberal platform which is as catholic as the Word of God.

“I might pursue this investigation still further, and show how other points of difference vanish into ‘airy nothings’ in the light of the practical method I am using. But I have said quite enough to demonstrate that Christian unity is a possible thing, and that the little church which is starting here,<sup>4</sup> with this motto emblazoned upon its banner, is not undertaking some Utopian scheme that ought not to be, and cannot be, practically realised.

“So much time has been taken up in the discussion of Christian unity that I can really say very little now concerning how to supply the other great needs to which I called attention in the

beginning of this address. But it is not necessary that I should say much, for what has already been said has a great deal to do with the questions of certainty and enthusiasm, as well as unity. In fact, that which will bring unity will likewise largely bring both of the others. Still I must ask your indulgence while I say a word or two further.

“That which will help to bring certainty is a plain, simple preaching of the Gospel, instead of doctrines, theories, speculations, science, and such like, which have too long occupied the most prominent place in pulpit ministration. In some instances even the Church has been substituted for ‘Christ and Him crucified.’ The old, old, story has been put in the background, while pretentious ecclesiasticisms have been brought to the front. Hence the first question which the sinner is now too frequently called upon to consider is, what church he is to join? rather than the real question that ought to concern him, what he thinks of Christ.

“The church is all-important in its place, but it should never be allowed to come between the sinner and the Gospel. It is the duty of the church not to usurp the proper place of Christ before the world, but to hold Him up as the ‘chief among the ten thousand, and as the One altogether lovely.’ The effort for ecclesiastical recognition is often much more earnest than the effort to save souls, and this fact has of itself stood like a mountain in the way of the success of the Gospel.

“Hence, in order that we may have certainty in our religious life—the ‘full assurance of faith’ of which the Apostle speaks—we must first accept Christ? Jesus the Lord as our all in all. We must understand that without His light and love we perish for ever. His divinity must be our foundation; His life our example; His death our salvation; His resurrection our hope; His intercession our fountain of grace and mercy; His teaching our guide; His church our school; His spirit our comforter; His

Gospel our reliance for the conversion of sinners ; His commandments our life ; His promises our rejoicing ; so that through faith and obedience we may be blessed with 'all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' To trust in the Lord Jesus, to love and obey Him—this is salvation here and life eternal hereafter.

"Hence, in an age like this, when there is so much unrest among the professed followers of Jesus, it is esteemed a special duty to call men away from the divisions of partyism to Christ the only Saviour ; from the confusions of the Apostasy to the order and harmony of the Primitive Church ; from human creeds and philosophies to the Bible ; from denominational names and interests to the symmetry and perfection of the body of Christ ; from speculative theology, which divides, to the faith and love of Christ, which unite ; from all that tends to alienation and strife to the unities and unity which apostolic teaching presents.

"When we have reached this point it will not be difficult to find the enthusiasm which characterised the Primitive Church. Instead of the present mechanical, ritualistic, stilted, and formal public worship, our churches will ring with the inspiring strains of heartfelt praise, and our sermons will be touched with a Pentecostal fire which will kindle a deep, enthusiastic earnestness among all the followers of Christ, while the trophies of the Gospel will be such as to encourage the belief that the kingdoms of this world will soon become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ."

It will be seen by the foregoing address that the new organisation was to proceed upon somewhat different lines from those occupied by the churches with which Mr. Coop had been formerly associated. From this time forward the plea for *Christian unity* was to be made a

prominent feature in the movement, and in making this plea it was proposed to emphasize points of *agreement* rather than points of *difference*.

This was regarded by Mr. Coop as a very important change in the policy of dealing with the various religious denominations. Heretofore his brethren in this country had, as he thought, neglected the plea for Christian unity, and, even when this plea had been urged, it had been presented, in his judgment, in a manner little calculated to attract public attention, if, indeed, it did not repel that attention. Mr. Coop's idea was, that it was vastly better to agree as far as possible with all the religious denominations, and then to recognise this agreement in dealing with them. He felt sure there were so many points of agreement, and so few involving vital differences, that if these points of agreement were made the basis of fraternal intercourse, and a proper spirit manifested, there would be at least some hope of settling the differences which separate the various religious bodies.

Whether Mr. Coop was right in this or not is not now the question. This is the view which he took of the matter, and this is why he felt so deeply interested in the new movement. He did not claim that the new church would differ in any essential doctrine from the churches with which he had so long been identified, but he did claim that the method of dealing with other religious people, as well as with the world, would be somewhat different; and the *spirit* of this dealing, he held, would



be a decided improvement upon the old spirit, which he regarded as more like the spirit of the *law* than of the *Gospel*. He felt that his brethren had manifested a legalistic spirit, by demanding a compliance with their own *interpretations* of Scripture before they would consent to have fellowship with those of other religious bodies. While he (Mr. Coop) believed that the spirit of the Gospel taught forbearance with errors of judgment quite as much, if not more, than with errors of conduct, he felt that the main matter was for all concerned to be thoroughly conscientious, and at the same time willing to be led into all truth.

Hence, as long as a person was conscientiously seeking to know the "way of the Lord more perfectly," Mr. Coop was willing to bear with even important deflections from what he regarded as truth. Indeed, his notions of liberty were such as compelled him to adopt this course. He claimed for himself the right to think, speak, and act as he thought proper, and what he claimed for himself he could not withhold from others. He, furthermore, saw now, much more clearly than he had ever seen before, that men who imagined that they were following the Word of God implicitly were after all only following their own *interpretations* of that Word; and as two equally intelligent persons might very conscientiously differ as to the meaning of a particular passage, Mr. Coop could see only three ways in which a matter like this could be settled :

- I. All difference of judgment could be delegated to

a council, or some representative body, who would have authority to settle the points of difference and formulate a creed which would present a basis for fellowship. This alternative justified human creeds, and, consequently, Mr. Coop could not accept it.

2. It might be settled by accepting the interpretations offered by self-constituted critics or leaders of religious thought and action. This alternative Mr. Coop regarded with much less favour than the first. He felt that if his theological thinking had to be done for him, it was better it should be done by men who were in some sense a representative body, selected by the parties concerned, and asked to make a deliverance in reference to the matters involved. He, furthermore, preferred a written creed to one that is unwritten. If he had to be governed by the opinions of others, he preferred not only that a representative body should formulate these opinions, but that the opinions themselves should be written out in definite terms and clear language, so that he could know exactly what was authoritative. In the case of an unwritten creed, he would be constantly subjected to the conflict of opinions that might exist between such leaders as assumed to do the thinking for the brotherhood.

3. The last alternative was that *individual* interpretation of the Scriptures should be recognised as the only safe rule of faith and practice. Mr. Coop saw that this was not entirely without difficulties, but he believed it was the best that could be done under the circumstances. He,

furthermore, believed that the right of individual liberty was the only thing which made the whole teaching of Scripture on the matter of charity intelligible. He saw that if men were to be allowed to judge for themselves, then it was absolutely necessary that they should exercise charity towards each other, as they could only be bound together by the cords of love. Hence, while rejecting the authority of human creeds, both written and unwritten, and falling back upon individual liberty in the interpretation of God's Word, he felt now that he was bound more than ever before to manifest charity towards all who might differ with him, and especially as he would have need of the same charity manifested towards himself.

It will now be seen why Mr. Coop felt special pleasure in the occasion of the opening of the new church, and also in the address, which had set forth the principles and aims by which its members would be actuated. He recognised fully the feasibility of the practical basis which was submitted for Christian unity, but he did not believe that even so simple a basis as the one presented could be made effective without the very kindest treatment of those who could not at once accept the basis suggested. He knew from experience that at any rate the baptismal question stood right in the way of practical Christian unity, and, consequently, whatever other difficulties might be got over easily, this one would require patient, prayerful, and loving teaching before it could be removed entirely.

Mr. Coop felt that the new Church, while it would hold steadfastly the principles for which he had been contending during so many years, would, at the same time, try to improve upon the methods which had heretofore been chiefly relied upon in this country. At any rate, he felt that now, for the first time, the movement for the restoration of Primitive Christianity in this country would take on more decidedly the American type than it had done in the past. He had, for a few years at least, felt that this type was necessary in order to the success of the movement in any high degree.

No doubt this feeling was intensified by Mr. Coop's visits to America, and his great admiration for the American people and their institutions. Nevertheless, it is only fair to say that in all this matter he professed to be governed by an honest conviction that nothing short of the spirit, aim, and methods which have been indicated would make a movement for the restoration of Primitive Christianity at all practicable in the United Kingdom. And, in vindication of this view, he was accustomed to point, not only to what he regarded as the comparative failure of the movement with which he had been associated, but also to the almost signal failure of what is known as the Plymouth Brethren movement, which had for its object very much the same thing as that proposed by Mr. Coop and his friends.

He was further encouraged by the actual results of the work which had been inaugurated in this country by

American evangelists. He pointed with pride to what had been done at Southampton and Chester, and now he was delighted with recording a fairly good success at Southport.

Undoubtedly the difficulties with his brethren at Southport did not help the new church. At first there was considerable difference between some of the Sussex Road brethren and those meeting at Mornington Road, and as this became known to the public, it was difficult to make the plea for Christian unity effective, when it was seen by outsiders that the two Churches most nearly allied to each other were not as fraternal as they should have been. This fact is stated in pain, but it is necessary that it should be stated in order to vindicate the truth of history.

But notwithstanding all drawbacks, the church at Mornington Road made decided progress. At its first anniversary meeting, held towards the close of the year 1879, the condition of the church was certainly very encouraging. At this meeting, the chairman stated that the church had started with twenty-nine members, and that within the year thirty-three had been added and none excluded, making the number at the close of the first year sixty-two. Ten persons had been baptized who took membership in other churches, and, consequently, the whole number of additions and conversions since the work commenced amounted to seventy-two. The financial statement also showed a healthy condition. During the

twelve months, the collections had amounted to £293 11s., and the expenditure £276 14s. 5*d.*, leaving a balance in the treasurer's hands of £16 16s. 7*d.*

This financial statement did not embrace the individual contributions made by the members. At this time Mr. Coop was giving largely in several directions. To the Foreign Christian Missionary Society of Cincinnati he was giving between £600 and £1,000 a year, while at the same time he was helping very liberally at several points in this country, besides contributing to the support of a mission in Paris, and several others in foreign fields. Indeed, from this time forward it is difficult to estimate the exact amount of money which Mr. Coop actually contributed yearly to the support of missions. His soul seemed to be absorbed in the work, and he never appeared to be so happy as when he was able to help deserving people in their efforts to carry the gospel to the nations.

As an evidence of what he was doing about this time, as well as an example of how he did it, it is only necessary to refer to a telegram which he sent the year before to the President of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, during the Annual Session of that Society in October. While the President, Dr. Isaac Errett, was delivering his address, in which he was urging the importance of missionary work and the necessity of raising an increased sum during the coming year, and expressing his confidence that God would provide, he

received a telegram from Mr. Coop, as follows: "Say to the Convention I subscribe £1,000. Read Col. iv. 12; and 2 Thess. iii. 1. Coop."

The two passages placed together in their order read as follows: "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. iv. 12). "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you" (2 Thess. iii. 1). This telegram produced great enthusiasm in the Convention, and had considerable influence during the year in stimulating liberality.

However, it is only truthful to say that his munificent gifts cost him some struggle. He was accustomed to remark that he gave from a deep sense of duty, and not because it was always pleasant to part with his money. The fact is, he did not regard his gifts as amounting to much, if they were not offered as a sacrifice. Hence, the more he felt the burden of giving, the more joy he experienced, and the better satisfied he was when the gift had been made. He was in the habit of saying that unless giving first of all hurt the man who gave, it was sure not to bless him much after he had given it. He recognized that it was more blessed to give than to receive, but, at the same time, he contended that the blessing came as the peaceable fruit, somewhat as it does after chastisement. He said a man who had worked for

money would be sure to feel the pain of the money leaving him.

Mr. Coop's view of the matter is here stated in order to show not only how clearly he reasoned, but also to show his deep conscientiousness and earnest loyalty to duty. He was ready to give, no matter how much he might feel it, if he was convinced that the cause to which he was giving was deserving.

On October 1st, 1879, a little monthly paper was started from Southport, entitled *The Evangelist*. The object of this was to furnish a medium of communication between the respective places where work was carried on by American evangelists. The paper was edited by one of these gentlemen, and a special column was devoted to each town where a work had been started. This little paper proved to be of considerable use in disseminating the principles of the new movement. Its tone was conservative, and its articles generally were helpful in teaching the members of the churches the distinctive aim which the movement had in view, as well as presenting the Gospel to the people in a very simple manner.

In justification of the new movement, as well as the grounds on which its plea was based, it may be well to quote from the introductory article of the first number of the paper. This extract will show that the apparent insignificance of the movement was not a discouraging feature to those who were engaged in starting it. It says:—

“ We presume that few, if any, discoverers of great facts or truths



have even a remote idea of the results which are to follow. Who can suppose that Watt had the faintest conception of what a revolution would be produced by the discovery of steam as a motive power? But it was far easier to foresee results in that case, than in the case of those who have discovered some great truth in religion and announced it to the world. It is easier to anticipate the results of physical causes than of moral causes.

“When Luther began his Reformation in Germany, it is doubtful whether the thought ever entered his mind that his work would be carried to such an extent as it has since been. But his movement struck a vital point in the affairs of men. It touched a popular chord; and a force of this kind once started cannot be very easily stopped. The Lutheran Reformation was an effort to free the soul from the bondage of priestcraft, to endow individuals with the prerogatives which Christ had conferred upon them, to give every man the right to exercise his own conscience in everything that pertains to his religious life.

“This was a new revelation to men at the time it was made. Not that it was really new, for Christ had taught the same doctrine fourteen hundred years before. But it was new to the age in which Luther lived, for Christ’s teaching had been for a long time overshadowed by the superstitions and corruptions of the Apostasy. Hence Luther’s announcement was like the breaking of light from the sun through the clouds of a dark day. It was the promise of manhood; of individual power; of the dawn of a new era, where freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and the right of individual interpretation should be the birthrights of every man, no matter how humble his position might be in other respects.

“This was a grand turning-point in the history of religion. Up to this time the Church had gradually gone deeper and deeper into the Apostasy. But Luther’s movement was an attempt to

return to Primitive Christianity. It did not entirely reach the point aimed at, but it prepared the way for it. It gave the endowment to individual manhood, and that was the first step out of the religious despotism which had so long held the world in spiritual bondage.

“Now if we carefully study this Reformation for a little while, it is easy to mark the places where it began to lose its force, and where another impulse was necessary to keep up the movement in the direction of the Primitive Church. The movement was practically crystallised in the Augsburg Confession of Faith. The possibility of progress was interdicted by the deliverance of an Ecclesiastical Council. The great tide which had set in toward the Apostolic Church was stayed by the strong wall of a human creed. Hence new leaders were necessary to carry on the work so auspiciously begun by Luther. And these leaders came as rapidly as they were needed. Calvin, Wesley, and others followed in quick succession, each performing a special work in restoring Christianity as it was in Apostolic times.

“But at the beginning of the nineteenth century another dead point was reached. At that time little or nothing was being accomplished for the overthrow of Popery and the conversion of the world. Protestantism had developed a number of rival sects, each warring against the other, and interested mainly in its own preservation, and having little care or concern for the great purpose which inspired Luther and his co-labourers in breaking away from the Roman Church and lifting up the standard of freedom for the individual conscience.

“At this critical moment a religious movement was started in the United States, which had for its purpose the completion of the work which had been partially accomplished by preceding reformations. This movement not only solemnly protested against the divisions of Protestants, but earnestly advocated the full restoration of Primitive Christianity in both its faith and

practice. It at once repudiated human creeds as bonds of union and communion, and declared the Holy Scriptures to be all-sufficient for instruction in everything necessary to the Christian life. It was insisted that in the conversion of sinners, the organisation of the church, and the development of Christian character, all human expedients should be abandoned, while the Divine model should be implicitly followed in every case.

“It is not strange that a Reformation so radical as this should, at the first, have met with decided opposition. The various Protestant sects, though bitterly opposed to each other, made common cause in fighting the new movement. But despite all opposition the movement made rapid progress. And as we contemplate its grand dimensions to-day, we think it quite improbable that the little band of men who first lifted up the restoration standard could have had the remotest idea of the success which has since followed. Though little over fifty years have passed away since the work began, a religious people, numbering over six hundred thousand communicants, are now marching under the bloodstained banner of the Cross, *acknowledging no leader but Christ, and no authority in religious matters but the Word of God.*

“But this does not express anything like the actual amount of good accomplished. The principles advocated have more or less influenced the whole of religious society in the New World. While most of the Protestant sects still maintain their distinctive features, the *spirit* of sectarianism has been largely cast out. Human creeds have no longer cabalistic influence. Almost everywhere the authority of the Word of God is recognised as supreme in all matters pertaining to faith and practice.

“It is furthermore abundantly evident that the union sentiment is rapidly gaining ground. Fifty years ago the divisions of Protestantism were generally regarded as providential arrangements for the accommodation of the different classes and conditions of men. But now these divisions are looked upon as

great evils, if not sinful ; while the sentiment in favour of a more sympathetic and active unity among the churches is well-nigh universal. Nor is this all. The plea that has wrought such wonders in the New World is beginning to be felt in the Old. Already a number of religious movements have been started in various parts of Europe, having for their object the same great end for which the reformers laboured in the United States. These movements are not always identical in every feature, but they have one grand purpose in view, viz.: *the overthrow of sectarianism, the unity and growth of the children of God, and the conversion of the world to Christ.*

“Our aim is to labour for the accomplishment of this grand work ; and to assist in it we cheerfully dedicate all our powers and interests. We are well aware of the difficulties in our way. We have fully counted the cost and already know some of the sacrifices involved. But we do not hesitate. The aim is an inspiring one, and as God shall give us strength and opportunity we will most joyfully work for its realisation.”

Whether the hopes of the originators of the movement have been fully realised or not, it cannot be doubted that their advocacy was on intelligible lines, and their faith and earnestness somewhat commensurate with the great work which they proposed to undertake. It can be truthfully said, at any rate, that Mr. Coop was thoroughly captivated by the fine generalisations which were set forth by the evangelists in question, and, so far as known, he from this time never faltered in his faith that ultimately a great work would be accomplished in this country in restoring Christianity as it is found in the New Testament. He always had the most abounding confidence

that the position he and his friends occupied was scriptural, and he now felt that they had adopted the right methods, and were manifesting the right spirit; and, as a consequence, he seemed to have few, if any, misgivings about ultimate victory, although he was not unmindful of the great obstacles to be overcome.

Early in September of this year Mr. Coop made his third visit to America, and attended the meeting of the General Convention of the churches of the Disciples, held on October 20th, at which time he made an address before the meeting of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society. He was appointed on this mission by a meeting of the evangelists in England held on August 5th, or five days after the organisation of the Christian Association at Helsby. As his address sets forth his own view of the condition of things in this country, it is thought well to give it entire, notwithstanding it contains some slight repetition of matters already mentioned. He spoke as follows:—

“DEAR BRETHREN,—I think it is proper that I should say a few words in explanation of my present visit. But in order to do this in an intelligible way, it will be necessary to present briefly the condition of things in Great Britain as regards the cause of Primitive Christianity.

“Almost contemporaneous with the religious movement which was started in your country by the Campbells and others, a movement similar in kind, and with the same objects in view, was started in our country. In order to help on the work in Great Britain, a monthly periodical was started, called *The Christian Messenger*,

and afterwards *The British Millennial Harbinger*, edited by Brother James Wallis, a brother with large Christian sympathies, intelligent in the Scriptures, and earnestly devoted to the cause of Christ. Under his able management, the *British Harbinger* represented practically the same principles and practices as were advocated by the *Millennial Harbinger*, edited by A. Campbell. In fact, one of the avowed purposes of our paper was to re-publish articles from the *American Harbinger*. During Brother Wallis's editorship, no word or sentence, so far as I have ever seen, was published that could in any way tend to alienate the brethren on the two sides of the Atlantic.

"But by-and-by the paper passed into other hands. Since then its character has been very different. Recently its spirit has been unkind, and during the last year its columns have been chiefly occupied in unlovely if not unchristian attacks upon the American evangelists and the American brethren.

"Under the moulding influence of this paper and the clever management of the annual meetings, it was not long until the character of our religious movement began to be changed. New questions arose, some of policy, some of faith, but all in my judgment quite unnecessary, and almost invariably tending to strife and division. Among these the Communion question was thrust into the foreground. Nor was it sufficient to hold decided views on this subject and to advocate these at suitable times and places. In a few cases the doctrine of Strict Communion was pushed to such an extent that practically the officers of a church became a sort of policemen for the detection of unbaptized people who might perchance unluckily drop into the meetings. Nor did the matter stop here. This zeal for guarding the Lord's Table against the unbaptized soon became so abounding as to hinder co-operation with even those who had been immersed, if these refused to enter into the strict police regulations which had been arranged for the suppression of heresy.

“Finally at the Annual Meeting held in Nottingham, 1866, matters culminated by the meeting passing the following resolution:—

“‘Resolved—that we learn with deep regret that some evangelists in America commune at the Lord’s Table with unbaptized persons, who without formal invitation, and, as it is alleged, on their own responsibility, partake; and we hereby decline to sanction evangelistic co-operation with any brother, whether from America or elsewhere, who knowingly communes with unbaptized persons, or who in any way advocates such communion.’

“Up to this time I had earnestly co-operated with the English brethren in their evangelistic efforts to extend the cause of Christ. I was conscious even before this that comparatively very little was being done. But as I understood the difficulties in our way, I did not despise the day of small things. But when we had an opportunity to secure the services of able men to help us in our work, and not only refused to accept these services, but actually by resolution offered an insult to our whole American brotherhood, I for one felt it was no use to any longer expect a better state of things while our English brethren followed the leadership of those who had secured the passage of the resolution I have just quoted. True, I did not give up entirely, but I lost heart. I worked on hoping against hope until just before my visit to America last year. I finally came to the conclusion to try to do what I could myself in securing competent men to preach the Gospel to the people of my native land. God had blessed me with some means, and I determined to use my means in the way I deemed wisest for the promotion of the cause of Christ. ‘I saw, or thought I saw, that the narrow, proscriptive policy adopted by the English brethren was neither scriptural nor wise. Then of one thing I was profoundly certain: that the policy carried to the extent it was, was clearly contrary to the whole spirit of our plea as it was originally presented in both England and America. I felt therefore that I

was not bound to follow my brethren in a course which seemed to me to be subversive of all the best interests of the work we had undertaken, and which was unquestionably in antagonism with the earnest plea which we had everywhere made for Christian union. So I felt justified in uniting my means with the means of the American brethren in the support of evangelists to do a work which I regarded as better and altogether more promising than would be done by the English churches.

“Under this conviction I visited America last year, and had a full and free conference with the Board of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society. The result of this conference was that we would continue to prosecute vigorously the work already so auspiciously begun in England. It was not proposed to interfere with the English churches nor to antagonise them in any way. But it was not proposed to tie ourselves down to their methods, and thus make our movement practically a comparative failure, as theirs had already been.

“Under the assurances of sympathy and help from the Board, I went home with a new heart and new courage for the great work before us, and it now affords me the greatest pleasure to state that our success in the last year has even more than exceeded my expectations. And in order that you may understand something of what has been done, I will here briefly recount the rise and progress of work under the different evangelists who are at present working in England; and I am glad to say also that what I may state is largely founded upon personal observation as to the real condition of affairs. I have visited all our mission stations in England several times, and can therefore tell both what I have seen and heard. [He here related the facts about the work.]

“A few words now in reference to the future of our work in England. Looking at the success which has already crowned our efforts, it seems to me that I am not unreasonable in hoping for results that will fully justify a much larger expenditure of means



than has yet been made. It is evident from past experience that a faithful proclamation of the Gospel will produce fruit in England as rapidly as anywhere else; still it must not be forgotten that most of the converts made are from the poorer classes, and cannot therefore be relied upon, at least for some time to come, for much material aid in carrying on the work. This fact ought not to surprise any one who is at all acquainted with the situation. Our movement is yet in its infancy. It has few, if any, of the elements of permanency to show to the people. The churches we have started are, with one exception, without suitable places for worship. And this fact alone stands greatly in the way of our success before a class of people we ought to be able to reach. We must not consider it contrary to human nature if we do not find men willing to give up pleasant religious associations, social friendships, and even often business advantages for what evidently seems to them a sort of experiment, without any immediate prospect that matters will be better. Now and then we may expect some to rise superior to all these difficulties, and identify themselves with our movement. But these cases furnish the exceptions, not the general rule. If the people whose ears we get were not religious at all, the difficulties I have hinted at would not be so prominent. But our movement is essentially an effort to lift the people to a higher religious position. Almost every one is already in some church or is in some way religious, so that our converts must necessarily come to us simply because we are able to show them a more excellent way. And when we undertake to do this, we at once encounter the difficulties I have enumerated.

“Now what is to be done? This is the vital question for the American churches to consider. With the exception of what a few persons can do, the help to sustain this work, at least for the present, must come from the American brethren. There is no use disguising the fact; the work cannot go on as it ought to unless we shall secure more largely your active co-operation than has yet

been done ; and as this is the time of our greatest need, I have been impelled to make this visit to you, with the hope that I might be able with a plain statement of the facts to stir you up to meet the responsibilities which are pressing you.

“I need scarcely urge upon you the importance of converting England to our plea. Could it be done, we might reasonably claim that perhaps half of the work of converting the world has been accomplished. Speaking after the manner of men, England is the most important strategic point from which to operate in conquering the nations for Christ. With a history baptized in blood, because of earnest efforts in behalf of religious and political freedom, I have no fears that our people will prove unfaithful to the trust, if once our glorious plea is fully committed to their hands. They already have the Bible ; let us help to teach them how to read it, and above everything how to live it, and it will not be long, I assure you, brethren, until you will get back with interest all you have contributed to sustain the cause in my country.

“While I thus earnestly plead for England, I am not unmindful of the claims of the other missions you have established. You have a most encouraging beginning in both France and Denmark. Having recently made a personal inspection of the mission in Paris, and having met there Brother Dr. Holck, your missionary in Copenhagen, with whom I had both there and at Southport much earnest conference, I am prepared to speak advisedly of the prospects of these respective missions.

“I need say but little more. To sustain these missions properly, and to plant others as rapidly as you can, seems to me to be a duty so self-evident that nothing but spiritual blindness can fail to see it. But this duty involves sacrifice, and this sacrifice must be made if the obligation is properly met. The question now is, Will you make it? Will you who have tasted so bountifully of the Redeemer’s love deny a few crumbs from your richly laden table

to the starving souls who are crying to you for the Bread of Life?

"Dear brethren, I hope you will pardon me if I seem to be too zealous. But realising the condition of things as I do, my earnestness is but a poor expression of the interest I feel in this work. May the good Lord open your hearts to a benevolence somewhat equal to the great responsibilities resting upon you!"

A few months later Mr. Coop made a second visit to Rome, and this time he was so interested in planting the Gospel there that he urged the American Society to send an evangelist to that city. In order to accomplish this, he offered to pay one-third of the expense of the whole mission. This, however, was found to be impracticable, for the reason that no suitable man could be found, and, consequently, Mr. Coop gave the matter up for the time, but did not fail to leave some substantial tokens of his interest in work which had already been started there by others.

During this year he travelled through other parts of the Continent, but everywhere he went he seemed to have only one thought before him, and that was the work of the Lord. Often, when it would have seemed better for him to remain quiet, he positively refused to do so, for the reason, as he expressed it, that he had not very long to live at best, and he felt that he must not waste any time.

Two events took place in 1880, which were the occasion of a celebration on the part of the employés of Coop & Co. Mr. Joe Coop was married, on August

25th, to Miss Jane, daughter of Mr. James, Nimmo of Edinburgh, and Mr. Frank Coop came of age on October 16th. The employés of Coop & Co, numbering about eight hundred and fifty, and also about seventy invited friends, went on an excursion to Windermere. Having made an early start, they reached Windermere for breakfast, where a most excellent spread was served at Rigg's Hotel. Coaches were waiting for the invited friends at this point, and the day was taken up in visiting Grasmere, Rydal, Ambleside, etc. All agreed that the day was spent in a most enjoyable manner, and the whole party returned greatly delighted with the outing. A few days after a presentation was made to Mr. Frank from the employés of the firm of a very fine gold watch, similar to the one given to Mr. Joe on his coming of age.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD.

**I**N the summer of 1880, after returning from a short visit to the Continent, where he had gone chiefly for his health, Mr. Coop determined to make a journey round the world. This journey was first suggested to him by his nephew, Mr. James P. Coop, who was himself arranging to go to Australia when his uncle reached home from the Continent.

The journey which Mr. Coop now determined to take embraced going out by way of America, the Sandwich Islands, New Zealand, and South Australia, returning by way of Ceylon, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, Egypt, and Palestine. But as he could do nothing without satisfying his conscience, he had to first convince himself that this journey could be justified on grounds which appeared to him at least altogether reasonable. He was finally induced to go from the following considerations :—

1. He wished to satisfy a long-cherished desire to visit the Churches in various parts of the world, and especially in Australia, to which a number of his old friends had migrated from England.

2. His health was very feeble at this time, and he had great hope that the sea voyage would do him good.

3. About this time he was greatly interested in Sunday-school work, and, indeed, in the education of children generally. He was particularly interested in the early conversion of children and their union with the Churches and he thought that he might have opportunity to urge upon the Churches the necessity of giving attention to this important matter.

These reasons were conclusive to him. His business was now in a good shape, his son Joe having been taken into partnership, and Frank having become efficient as a helper in the wholesale department. He was, furthermore, well satisfied with the progress of the Church at Southport, and was greatly encouraged in regard to all the places under the direction of American evangelists. He felt that the time had come when he could be spared from the work at home for the long journey he had in view.

Accordingly, having made every needful arrangement, he set sail, on August 27th, for New York. From this point he sailed up the Hudson to Albany, and thence went to Pompey and Syracuse, attending the State Convention, where he made an address on the early conversion of children, which was warmly received by the delegates. From this point he visited Cleveland, and then went on to Cincinnati, where he began at once his investigations among the children. He visited the public day schools of that city, and recorded many facts and

impressions. He was especially mortified at being told that the Bible had been ruled out of these schools through the influence of the Roman Catholics and infidels.

After remaining in Cincinnati a short time, and making some arrangements with the Foreign Christian Missionary Board, with respect to the work in England during his absence, he started on his way to San Francisco.

He went first to St. Louis, where he remained a short time ; he then continued his journey to Omaha, passing through Kansas City, where he lost his overcoat, and from which point he telegraphed to his friend and brother Henry Exley, who was then living at Lincoln, Nebraska, to meet him at Omaha, and accompany him on his trip round the world. Mr. Exley received this telegram on September 17th, and on Saturday morning set out to meet Mr. Coop, and joined him at Omaha about five minutes before the train left for San Francisco.

Arriving at Salt Lake City, they stopped for a few days, and Mr. Coop was greatly interested in studying the customs and habits of the Mormons. He was also astonished at the remarkable progress which he noticed on all sides. He found that, mixed with a great deal of error, the Mormons held to some important truths. He was especially disgusted with their polygamy, and his visit there only increased his desire that General Garfield, who was then President of the United States, would succeed in his brave efforts to put down the Mormon iniquity. Mr. Coop had taken the liveliest interest in the

General's election, and was now profoundly impressed with his high moral aim in seeking to arrest so great an evil as Mormonism seemed to be.

Nevertheless, Mr. Coop could not shut his eyes to the fact of the physical prosperity which he everywhere beheld. Nor was he disposed to interfere with the Mormons in the exercise of any legitimate liberty. But he saw that Mormon liberty meant *licence* in some things at least, and this he conceived to be even more dangerous than despotism. However, he saw much in Salt Lake City to interest him, and still more that was helpful in giving him clear ideas of government and duty.

Arriving at San Francisco on September 23rd, he was met by his nephew, Mr. J. P. Coop, who had first suggested the propriety of making the journey upon which he had now entered. They remained in this city only two days, but Mr. Coop was greatly interested in all he saw. He was especially struck with the appointments of the hotels, the views from the hills, and a new system of tramcars, driven by stationary steam engines and endless wire cables.

As soon as they arrived at San Francisco, while seeking their way to the ferryboat, they met an old friend of Mr. Exley's from Wakefield, England, Mr. Exley's native town. They had not seen each other for thirty-two years.

On September 25th they went on board the ss.



*Zealandia*, and set sail for Auckland, New Zealand. Seven days out they put in at Honolulu, called the "Paradise of the Pacific." Mr. Coop was surprised to find this island, which only a little time before had been full of cannibals, now civilised, and under the influence of Christian principles, the king himself being a thoroughly well-educated Christian gentleman.

On October 17th they reached the city of Auckland, where for several reasons they decided to land and remain for a time.

As a detailed account of Mr. Coop's visit to New Zealand and Australia is given in a work entitled "A Trip Around the World. A Series of Letters by Timothy Coop and Henry Exley," it is not necessary to do more here than to briefly mention some of the points visited and Mr. Coop's impressions of the same. Indeed, it may be just as well to copy from Mr. Coop's notes the record he made concerning the places he visited. These notes are given, not only because of the information which they contain, but also as a specimen of his laconic style in recording his facts and impressions. They are copied *verbatim et literatim* :—

"AUCKLAND, New Zealand.—Exley sick : nursed him day and night. Went to find the brethren. Sunday-school very close ; not allowed to teach. Monday before noon six brethren called, and wanted us to move from the hotel. We consented. Good, noble, generous, kind-hearted people. Fine, good-looking city. Very hilly. Wooden houses, except the main street. Streets

twenty yards wide, twelve feet parapets ; good roads in the country. The people look thoroughly English—looks like HOME ; well educated and temperate. Public houses closed on Sundays ; no omnibuses run then, and railway only once a day. The people work only eight hours. Went shark-fishing. Stayed five weeks, and spoke every Sunday. Baptized sixteen persons, Exley fifteen—Polly Smith, a young man from Meeks, and lots besides.

“PAPAKURA.—Farming country, twenty miles. Met Caleb Wallis. Exley preached, and I spoke ; living in lodgings. New church. Stock-farming. Race horses, two and three years, worth from £200 to £600. Wheat farms ; forty-five bushels per acre. Bush-ranging. Horses ran away. Kauria trees eight feet nine inches diameter. The Maoris live in huts and in the ground ; are without clothes ; some rich ; dying out fast. Climate 73 degrees. No frost. Will grow almost anything. Grand opening for preaching the Gospel. People willing to hear. Cannibals fifty years ago.

“WELLINGTON.—The seat of government. Steam trams ; cost less than horses. Coke, 30s. per ton. Engine-driver, £14 per month. Ticket-man £12. Engine made by Merryweather, London ; two years and no accident ; can go fifteen miles an hour and stop within four feet. Met Garry. Brother Bates pastor.

“CHRISTCHURCH.—City built on land belonging to the English Protestant Church, given them by government many years ago. Let on lease ; grand farming land ; sixty bushels per acre. Potatoes ten to twenty bushels per acre. A man killed between trams, but no fault of the driver. A fine cathedral ; slating, dark grey stone and white Bath stone.

“DUNEDIN.—Met by Brother Jennion and two others. Brother Matthew Green ; his church, four hundred and fifty members. Two other churches. Manufacturing Clothing Company ; woollen and blankets. Fruitful valley ; one hundred bushels oats per acre. Tabernacle.

"TASMANIA, or Van Diemen's Land.—Prisons. Pretty little hilly town, built of white stone. On six hours. The brethren are building a new church.

"Stormy sail to MELBOURNE.—Next to London, wool warehouses, shops, banks, churches. While you in England are almost frozen to death we are burned. Dinner and tea in the garden. Sun 145 degrees. Exhibition good. Four or five Disciple Churches; they use this name. Free library, the largest. Model lodging house 6*d.* a night. Town Hall, seats 3,000. Library worth £74,000—108,208 books. Mr. Eastham and wife pulled a long face. Mr. Rowe is working for Hindle. Edward Taylor gone to Sydney. Rev. — Rentoul doing well, but likes England. Hindmarsh, good Sunday-school: the best.

"ADELAIDE.—Fine, well-laid-out city. Park half a mile wide all round the city. Banks, town hall, post-office, trams, reading-rooms, schools of art. Brethren more liberal and advanced. Felt at home here. Working men's houses. Free traders and more prosperous."

On January 22nd, 1881, Mr. Coop set sail on his return journey on the ss. *Garonne* of the Orient line, leaving Mr. Exley to labour in Australia for a while longer in response to the earnest solicitations of brethren there. It is deemed best to continue Mr. Coop's own notes while recording incidents and impressions on the steamer, as well as during his visit to Palestine and Egypt. The notes from this time are fuller than those recorded concerning New Zealand and Australia, and they are here given more in detail, as no account of Mr. Coop's return journey is in the book "A Trip Around the World."

The record is as follows:—

## "RETURN TRIP.

"January 30th, 1881.—Lord's Day. Sermon on ss. *Garonne*. In the afternoon the Captain announced that I would hold a preaching service in the Fore Square open deck. There was a good attendance. Engines stopped. Stokers came up for fresh air. One dripping with perspiration. I said, 'You are pretty warm.' 'Oh yes. We have had a bit of hard work, but what we have to do is to study the Bible and keep our digestion right.'

"February 6th.—Lord's Day. Had church service on deck: pleasant and profitable. In the afternoon I was desired to speak to the steerage passengers. Spoke on 'Religion, what is it?' Good attention. Purser kindly got some good singers, also a concertina. All passed off well. The Captain said that we were short of coal, and that he was going to stop to coal at Colombo instead of at Aden. We had head winds, and bad coal, and the engines stopped five hours one day.

"February 9th.—Hurrah! Landed at Colombo. Lots of catamaran boats, manned by copper-coloured men, with only a cloth round the waist and a loose shirt; a regular Babel. Men dressed like women, with their cards to show they were genuine. All kinds of rings and trinkets to sell. Colombo a pretty good harbour. Barracks, Government Offices, Roman Catholic Cathedral, Buddhist Temple, Mahommedan Temple, Wesleyan Methodist Church, with Sunday and Day Schools, doing good work. Going into Buddhist Temple a priest came running out, and got hold of me, and stopped me, saying, 'No! no! no! go wash.' So I had to go to a pool, take off my shoes, wash, and then leave my shoes at the door before I could go in. This I regard as a sample of close communion. A catamaran boat came up to the side of the ship with five persons in. There was a regular discussion as to the sex of one of the persons.

After some time this person turned out to be a man—a butcher wanting to sell the Captain some meat. We took a carriage, and had a wonderfully interesting drive. Saw hundreds of little children, most of them entirely naked. Boys flocked around our carriage to beg or sell, running three or four miles. The houses made of bamboo. Such places I never saw. Went into the Wesleyan Chapel. Minister out of city. Man in charge could not speak English. The hymn books were English and some other language—uttra muttra.

"February 10th.—Left Colombo 11:30. After a few days of monotonous sailing I suggested a meeting in the Fore Square deck. This was taken up at once, and the following resolutions were passed:—

"1. That it is desirable that a meeting be held to-morrow morning at 10:30, in the Fore Square deck, to discuss the subject of the British Colonies, New Zealand and Australia, being good places for the British people to emigrate to.

"2. That all passengers who desire will be at liberty to take part.

"3. That this meeting pledges that it shall be an orderly meeting, and that only one speaker be allowed to speak at a time.

"4. That each speaker be allowed ten minutes only, except by the consent of the chairman.

"5. That Mr. T. Coop take the chair, and preside over the meeting.

"The meeting was composed of all nationalities and all sorts of people, some that had done well and others returning disappointed; sober men and tipplers; rough and smooth; religious and infidels. Some were ready for a good lively discussion; amongst these were a smart auctioneer and several other clever men. Promptly at the time there was a good gathering. At first it appeared likely to be a noisy meeting, but gradually became more orderly.

“After being pressed to take the chair I made a few remarks, saying I was glad to have the privilege of meeting with them on this very bright, sunny morning, and hoped we should have a pleasant and profitable meeting. I suggested that each speaker should give his name and address at the commencement, so that he could be properly introduced, and also if he chose say how long he had been in the colonies. It was desirable to receive the testimony of practical experienced men, as the subject was an important one. The circle I had moved in during my visit to the colonies, and what I had read, might have given me a too favourable impression as to the merits of the colonies.

“The first speaker was a painter (no account); the second a cattle-man; the third a mechanic; the fourth a young man, all complaint, said meat at 2*d.* per lb. was dear; the fifth a bushman, landed with money, there was a drought, and he lost six hundred head of cattle; the sixth, an Irishman, said, ‘The climate is good, but that won’t keep a man;’ the seventh, a commercial man, had earned £1 a day, but complained of the dishonesty, etc., Cheap Jacks did well; had been to England six times; the eighth, a Mr. Hurley, made a good speech in favour of the colonies.

“February 20th. Lord’s Day; service on deck in the afternoon. Invited and pressed to speak on the history of the children of Israel, and their passage through the Red Sea. I consented, and the people listened with interest.

“February 22nd. The first sight this morning was Mount Sinai. It filled me with sacred awe and profound contemplation. The rocks and mountains all along the coast very grand. Passed several sunken ships, with their funnels jutting out of the water. The sight filled us with horror.

“February 23rd. Arrived at Suez at 6 a.m. Took boat for eight shillings, but had to pay fifteen. Too late for the train, so

had to stop a day. Had a lively donkey-ride on the smallest, strongest, best-going donkey I ever rode on.

"SUEZ: an old tumbledown city, but in advance of Colombo. A day school was opened four months ago, with thirty or forty children: fine-looking lot of boys. The men are a large noble looking race. An awful pest for backsheesh—barren hills and dales. Lively market, one storey flat houses; would be very easy to take off roof and let down bed. Drinking on the increase, French and German lewd women, most awful sins at night: not safe to go out without guide.

"ZAGAZIG STATION. A large cotton station. Saw the slave-driver in the mill with whip in hand. The hands work from 6 a.m. till 9 p.m. Sunday and weekdays alike; in busy times from 4 a.m. till 9 p.m. Cotton ginned, and the seed taken out and sent to Alexandria.

"The land of Goschen is a very rich, fertile land at the present time. They have the same methods of irrigation as in Joseph's time. Visited and went into the Great Pyramid.

"Met my son Frank at Cairo. He had telegraphed from England to Melbourne that he would be in Cairo in February; I received the cablegram the day after I got to Melbourne and made my arrangements accordingly. He spent about a month in Egypt, going up the Nile. He was very unwell when he left England, but the sea voyage and the trip up the Nile did him much good, so that he returned home quite strong.

"February 26th. Frank and I went together from Cairo to Port Said.

"February 27th. Lord's Day. Heard a sermon in the Mission Room by a Wesleyan. A young Scotch evangelist had been there about a year. There was a congregation of about forty persons, most of them English travellers. A very good meeting. The evangelist had no Sunday or day school. I strongly urged him to begin a school and not think so much about

converting the old Mahommedans as taking hold of the children. He made all sorts of excuses, but I insisted that this was the work for him to do.

"A French lady who had learned the native language was a great assistance to the evangelist as she could translate small tracts into their language. She had been a member at Mr. Hurditch's mission, and was well up in the first principles of the Gospel. There was also another evangelist in the neighbourhood who had been brought up a Baptist. But the lady was far ahead of these evangelists, and to my mind would do far more real missionary work. I am getting more convinced every day that preaching and missionary work are more for women than men. It was so in Paul's day. He said, 'Help those women.'

"I looked all through Port Said to see if there were any schools. At last I got into a thronged neighbourhood of working people, and saw a long room and heard a noise like singing. I tapped at the door and found a school of one hundred or two hundred children. Very soon a boy came with a box to solicit something toward the expenses of the school. There were two Catholic priests and several monitor teachers. I was confirmed in my views that the Roman Catholics know how to evangelise. They are not afraid to stoop to conquer.

"JERUSALEM, March 6th, 1881. We arrived in Jaffa on the 27th ult., and spent some time in looking around the place. We visited what is said to be the house of Simon the tanner, which is by the seaside, where Peter was to be found, who should tell Cornelius and his household what they ought to do. We were also much interested in Miss Arnott's school. I was so pleased with what I saw at the school that on leaving I put a £5 note into her hand, and said I would call again if I had time on my return journey. I called a second time, and had a long talk with her on the first principles with open Bible for about two hours. She paid the greatest attention.



“Second day. Up at six o'clock, mounted our horses and rode through the orange and lemon groves, crossed the plains of Sharon, where we remained all night in our tents.

“Third day. Rode along the valley of Ajalon, by the mountains of Judea, to Kirjath-jearim, where the Ark rested after its return from the land of the Philistines, into the tribe of Benjamin, by Emmaus (Luke xxvi. 13), where we took lunch. Then we ascended the last mountain before Jerusalem. Before entering the city we had a fine view. We entered the Joppa Gate about 3.30, after a splendid ride through the most barren, rocky hills my eyes ever beheld, seeing neither grass nor tree for miles until we got near Jerusalem.

“Fourth day. Visited some of the scenes in the Holy City, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Mount Calvary, Mosque el Aksa, originally a church, but changed into a mosque by the Mahommedans in the seventh century, restored by the Crusaders into a church in the eleventh century, and again in the twelfth century turned into a mosque. We also saw ‘the rich man’s house’ and ‘the poor man’s house,’ also Pilate’s Judgment Hall or Ecce Homo—behold the man. This is now a Catholic Church. It is said our Saviour took the Cross from this place. The Pool of Bethesda is a large open pool without water, where all the filth of the neighbourhood is deposited. An English gentleman proposed to meet the entire expense of having it cleaned out and filled with water again, but the Pasha would not allow him to do it without a ‘Blacksheesh’ of £600 sterling. This the English gentleman would not consent to, and so the pool remains a stinking, filthy place, in harmony with the government of this wretched country.

“Opposite the east gate is Mount Olivet, and near it the Sheep’s Pool, Mount Moriah, the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the Garden of Gethsemane. While gazing at these deeply-interesting places a number of persons, whom I suppose were females, though I

could not see their faces, dressed in white, and with common red cotton handkerchiefs in their hands, began to twist these and wail and howl in a most dreadful manner. On inquiry we were told that they were the wailers for the dead. On the right were the tomb for the Jews. We were informed that all the Jews like to be buried there, so that they will be near at the Resurrection Day, when our Saviour comes and puts His feet on Mount Olivet. We went under the Arch, where Jesus said, 'Weep not for Me,' etc., saw the stone with open mouth, where Jesus said, 'If you hold your peace the stones will cry out.' The people come and kiss the open-mouthed stone as though there was some virtue in it. We went through the valley of Gehenna or Hell. We were glad to find no fire, but instead a fertile valley with olive trees. Our dragoman told us that this was the place where the god Moloch was set up with open arms to receive the little children that were sacrificed to it. Some one made the remark that it would be well if the New Testament Hell should end like this one, which remark led to some discussion concerning the new translation. It was stated that when the translators came to the word 'Hell' the chairman put the question as follows: 'All who are for Hell hold up your hands.' It is probable, however, that the translation will make a distinction between *Gehenna* and *Hades*, as it is generally conceded that these words have very different meanings.

"We saw the place where Peter denied his Master, the large stone that was placed at the tomb of Jesus, the room of the Last Supper, and the tomb of David. This last the Mahomedans have possession of, and no Christian is allowed to enter it; and no one has entered it except the daughter of Dr. Barclay the American Missionary sent by our brethren to Jerusalem. She disguised herself in Turkish costume, and securing for an attendant a female of the custodian's family, was allowed to enter the tomb, and while there made a drawing of it which is printed in

Dr. Barclay's book, entitled, 'The City of the Great King.' Had she been discovered it is very probable she would have paid the penalty of her courage with her life.

"The streets of the city are very narrow ; in fact, not sufficiently wide for a carriage to go through, though there are no carriages in Jerusalem, but plenty of donkeys and camels.

"In the Armenian convent, or church, they all take off their shoes to worship. The tomb of St. James is in this convent, and they showed us his chair, waiting for him to come back, as he was the chairman of the Apostles. They are expecting him very soon. In taking the Lord's Supper, they pound the bread and mix it with the wine, and drink it mixed. Four large stones are shown : 1st, the stone upon which the law was given on Mount Sinai ; 2nd, the stone out of Jordan ; 3rd, the Transfiguration stone ; and the stone or marble slab on which Jesus was placed after He was taken from the Cross. The Holy Sepulchre, or tomb, where it is said our Lord was buried, is lit up in very brilliant style, with all kinds of lamps and candles. The Mahommedans have the key, though all nations and religions are allowed to come and worship here. In this place there is a cross, which is said to be the centre of the world, though I do not know exactly how this is made out ; still it may be just as trustworthy as many other things which are told you as though there was no doubt about their truth. We were shown the place they cast lots for Christ's garments, and where He was scourged ; the spot also where He was nailed to the Cross, the rock that was rent at the Crucifixion. I put my hand into what was declared to be the veritable tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Of course I do not vouch for the truth of all these things. As Jerusalem has been wholly destroyed and rebuilt since the time of Christ, it is quite certain that many of the stories told you are pure fiction ; still it is possible to locate most of the events of the Bible, and it is probable that most of the places pointed

out are close to, if not identical with, the exact spots spoken of in the Scriptures. So after subtracting all exaggerations and mistatements, I am all the while conscious that I have been walking among some of the most sacred scenes of which history gives any account.

"Leaving Jerusalem we went to Bethlehem. Visited what is claimed to be the oldest church in the world. We saw where Christ was born, the stable, and the place of the manger. We then rode towards Mar Sabas across the valley of Rephaim (2 Samuel). Saw Rachel's tomb. We then went on to Solomon's Pools and Gardens. We were much interested in these, but a description of them is impossible in these brief notes. We pitched our tents in the valley of Kidron. In reaching this we had a very wet ride; but we were soon in our tents, where we were quite comfortable. While sitting by our tables with lighted candles, reading up our day's journey in the Bible, we were all of a sudden startled by the wind which seemed to be threatening our tents with overthrow. The men outside were apparently greatly excited, and busily engaged in strengthening our stakes and making everything secure. We were ordered not to undress for the night. Frank and I got hold of the centre pole as it really seemed the tent would be blown over every moment. But the wind soon calmed down as suddenly as it had arisen, after which we went to sleep, the Lord watching over us and keeping us from harm.

"We visited an English Church School, but it was dinner time and they were just going away. However, they returned and sang for us. There are about thirty day scholars in this school, taught by two English ladies. After lunch we again mounted and came to a Greek convent in a very romantic spot. No ladies are allowed to enter. This convent was established in the fifth century. Saint Sabas, a pious monk, lived here, and went into a cave that had been occupied by a lion. He commanded the lion to come out. His lionship at first refused, and instead of coming

out dragged the saint out. But the saint persisting, after being dragged out twice, the lion at last consented that they should both live in peace together in the cave. This they did until the lion died. The monastery was built over the cave, and is now occupied by a large number of monks, who are vegetarians and live on herbs, fish, etc. They are a miserable-looking set. The country is wild and barren, not a house to be seen for miles, and yet there were once 60,000 hermits who lived in these dens and caves; but the Persians coming upon them massacred 40,000. In this monastery there is a church which contains some very ancient pictures, one of which represents the baptism of Christ by immersion.

“We next visited the Dead Sea and the Jordan. Several of our party had talked considerably about filling their bottles with the Jordan water. One man said he had to take several bottles full home with him, as there were about sixty babies waiting to be christened when he returned. This seems to be the habit of many pilgrims. But we cannot understand why this water should be preferred in the matter of sprinkling. Surely the use John made of the Jordan, and Christ’s baptism in it do not very forcibly suggest the idea of baby sprinkling. Most of our party were evidently disappointed when we reached the famous river. Certainly it was not what any of us had expected. Before us was a narrow, yellow, muddy stream, not very inviting to the bathers, and yet those who had come to bathe and fill their bottles were not going to be put off by trifles. So without taking off their clothes, they simply took off their shoes and stockings, rolled up their breeches’ legs, and started to wade into at least the edge of the water. But before they could do this they sunk up to their knees in mud. The sight was truly ludicrous, and I could have roared with laughter, but did not wish to disturb their pious meditations. We soon left the bathers and went a little further, just opposite the place where Jesus was baptized. One said to the dragoman, ‘And

is this the place where Jesus was baptized?' The reply was, 'This is certainly the place.' 'And did He go into that stream?' continued the questioner. Before the dragoman could reply, one of our company, a white haired, venerable Scotch clergyman, said with emphasis, 'No, He did not go into the river at all; He was sprinkled, not immersed; it was not possible for John to immerse Him: such an effort would have been dangerous, and both might have lost their lives.' Of course I had heard this argument before, and now I saw that it was absurd. The dragoman insisted that Jesus was immersed there, while the clergyman insisted as strongly that he was not. A man standing by asked which one we were to believe, and I could not help thinking that the division of sentiment on this subject is making sceptics, and is causing others to ask the same question this man did. While the dragoman and clergyman were disputing, a horse went down into the water to drink, and came up again. The clergyman's attention was called to the horse, but he declared he did not see that. After we had seen the Pool of Siloam, this same clergyman was asked if he thought the blind man washed in that pool. He answered, 'Certainly.' And yet the pool Siloam is ten times deeper than the Jordan before you get to the water, and still the blind man could enter this without difficulty, but the shallow sloping bank of the Jordan was dangerous, and consequently immersion in the river was out of the question. The dragoman said, 'I am no Baptist, but I must be honest and true to the facts.' But the clergyman thought he must be honest also, and hence he must be true to his *creed*, no matter what became of facts and Scripture.

Leaving the Jordan, about two hours' ride brought us in sight of Gilgal, under the mountains where it is said our Lord was tempted by the Devil. At 7.10 in the morning we mounted our horses again and soon reached the ancient site of Jericho, and Elisha's fountain. Then the valley of Achor, crossing the brook Cherith, 1 Kings xxvi. 3. We passed the Samaritan's Inn, the spot where

a certain man fell among thieves. We then went through Bethany where Martha and Mary dwelt. Saw the tomb of Lazarus, the Garden, the most solemn and interesting of all, and reached Jerusalem about six o'clock.

It is impossible to give the whole of Mr. Coop's notes, though they are all interesting and full of facts concerning the things he saw and heard. However, we cannot omit to mention another evidence of his interest in education and missionary work. While in Jerusalem, he visited the mission school conducted at Christ Church, and was so impressed by the work that he agreed to send, on his return to England, one hundred suits of children's clothing for boys from six to ten years of age, the teacher having stated that the clothes would enable one hundred more poor Jewish boys to attend the school. On Mr. Coop's return these suits were sent. He was also very much interested in the school at Jaffa, visiting this and addressing the children. On his return home he sent some donations to this school, but just how much cannot now be traced.

Leaving Jaffa, Mr. Coop and his son Frank sailed by way of Port Said, Alexandria and Malta for home, reaching Southampton on April 7th and Southport the following day. He had been absent in all seven and a half months, and had travelled about 30,000 miles without accident or any serious illness, and as he says himself having brought back the umbrella with which he started.

Mr. Coop's health was greatly benefited by this trip and he came home in good spirits to begin again

earnest efforts in planning and labouring for the work of his Master.

On the Saturday following his arrival a number of the church people and friends met at the Church of Christ, Mornington Road, and extended to the returned travellers a hearty welcome home. The proceedings were quite informal and unpretentious, but were none the less cordial on that account. Several congratulatory speeches were made, while the responses were warmly applauded. The occasion was one of good cheer, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who were present.

The following account of Mr. Coop's reception at Wigan is condensed from the *Wigan Observer* of April 16th.

"On Wednesday evening Mr. Coop was the guest of his workpeople at a friendly re-union held at the public hall, Wigan. Shortly after five o'clock over seven hundred people sat down to a substantial tea in the assembly room of the hall, and afterwards there was a public meeting and presentation. The room had been most tastefully decorated for the occasion with mottoes, flowers, etc., the platform being one mass of shrubs and exotics supplied from the garden of Mr. James Marsden. Over the platform was the motto 'For Auld Lang Syne,' and directly facing on the front of the gallery 'Welcome Home.' In other parts of the room were mottoes such as 'Honour to whom honour is due,' 'Success to Coop & Co.' The chair was taken by Mr. Marsden, and among those present were friends from Southport, Manchester, Bolton, Carlisle, etc.

"After the opening exercises and chairman's address, Mr. H. Malcolm, the chief mechanic in the employ of the firm, then rose to present a beautifully illuminated address to Mr. Coop.



He said he had been asked to make the presentation, and though he had consented to perform the ceremony, he felt he should be unable to convey to Mr. Coop the feelings of respect and esteem which were entertained by them for him. The address was their own selection, and he hoped it would be accepted in the spirit in which it was offered. The address was as follows :—

“ ‘ To T. COOP, ESQ., J.P. DEAR SIR,—We the undersigned, representing the employés of Messrs. Coop & Co., at Dorning Street, Wallgate, and School Common, and numbering in the aggregate over one thousand persons, take this opportunity of giving you a hearty welcome on your safe return from your voyage round the world.

“ ‘ Your re-appearance amongst us, after some months’ absence, coupled with your recent promotion to the magisterial bench, was thought a suitable occasion on which to show in some small way the affection and respect in which we hold you.

“ ‘ The happy relationship which has always existed between yourself and those in your employ, and your earnest and careful consideration for their comfort and welfare, induces us to wish that for very many years you may be spared to be the worthy head of the firm in which we are all interested.

“ ‘ David Brown, John Swift, John Gibson, Henry Malcolm, Joe Coop, John Hurst, James Holt, and Alfred Roscoe.

“ ‘ April 13th, 1881.’

“ The address had been most tastefully illuminated, and was enclosed in a massive gilt frame. Continuing, Mr. Malcolm : ‘ Dear sir, Allow me, on behalf of the workpeople, to request your acceptance of this illuminated address, embodying, as it does, the sentiments of respect and esteem that I know we all share. We trust that for many years the same cordiality and sympathy between employers and employed will remain to keep us united

in heart and mind, that the business at Dorning Street, Wallgate, and School Common may go on and prosper, and that we, as employés, may have pleasure and satisfaction in retaining the confidence of our employers. We trust that not the intrinsic value of the article itself, although a beautiful work of art, and creditable to the skill and artistic abilities of the illuminator, will be taken into consideration; it is a very small matter, but we, ask you to accept it from the feelings which have prompted it. (Applause.)

“Mr. G. Collin (Carlisle) and Mr. J. Holt (Bolton) also spoke. The latter gentleman said he thoroughly endorsed all that had been said as to the many excellent qualities of Mr. Coop as an employer. If they reviewed the position Mr. Coop now occupied and remembered his efforts, his diligence, and perseverance it would be seen that he had not laboured in vain. When they saw so many pleasant faces before them, and that those faces represented a certain amount of intellect which had been brought into activity into connection with the extensive establishment of which Mr. Coop was the originator, they ought to feel exceedingly glad and grateful that they had such a noble-minded man among them. Mr. Coop had worked for the moral and intellectual improvement of his workpeople, and had always acted towards them in a spirit of charity and benevolence. (Applause.)

“Mr. Coop’s response was heartily cheered; after this, the Rev. Canon Fergie, who had just entered the room, was called upon to say a few words. He said there was only one consideration that induced him to reply with the request, and that was that he desired to express, which he did most cordially, his heartfelt satisfaction at having an opportunity, in conjunction with those present, of welcoming Mr. Coop back to his home and to his people. (Applause.) He was desirous to add his high appreciation of the excellence of their esteemed employer, Mr. Coop. It was now thirty-three years since he had the pleasure of first

forming Mr. Coop's acquaintance, and during the whole of that period he had watched closely the progress he (Mr. Coop) had made through life, and he thought it redounded to the honour of any man that it should be able to be said of him, that throughout the whole of such a lengthened career he had ever appeared before the people as a man of just and unswerving integrity, great perseverance, business aptitude and sagacity, and above all benevolent enterprise. (Applause.) Whilst he had been thoroughly mindful of his own welfare he had never been forgetful of his duty to his neighbour and to his God. (Applause.) He looked upon Mr. Coop even as the originator of a new industry in Wigan, and therefore as a public benefactor. And during the time to which he had referred, independent of all sectarian feelings and prejudices, Mr. Coop had been ever ready to help forward any good work which would tend to the amelioration of his fellow men. (Applause.) He remembered with great pleasure and gratitude what he did for the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary of Wigan. He remembered also what he had done in connection with the Homœopathic Dispensary, and that, also at very great personal sacrifice he had reared a beautiful structure in Southport to the honour and praise of Almighty God. (Applause.) And though he (Canon Fergie) was a staunch and uncompromising Churchman, yet at the same time that did not lead him to withhold his high admiration of one who, like Mr. Coop, whilst a firm and consistent religionist in a certain direction, displayed a large and benevolent spirit in his dealings with and his estimate of his fellows around him. He trusted that Mr. Coop might have many, many happy years in the enjoyment of that health, prosperity, and position to which his patient perseverance, his plodding industry, and his unswerving integrity so justly entitled him. (Loud applause.)

"The National Anthem was then sung, and the large and enthusiastic audience dispersed shortly before eleven o'clock."

## CHAPTER XX.

### NEW MEN AND NEW EXPERIENCES.

JUST before Mr. Coop's return from his trip around the world, another evangelist, J. H. Garrison, M.A., of St. Louis, Missouri, came over, and was in the month of February installed pastor of the Mornington Road Church, Southport. Evangelist J. L. Richardson of America had preceded Mr. Garrison, but returned home soon, where, after a few years of ill-health, he died. Mr. Garrison had been editor for several years of the *Christian Evangelist*, a leading paper devoted to the plea advocated by the Disciples of America, and his position in his own country was in the front rank of his brethren as an able writer, a wise counsellor, and a clear and forcible preacher. His going to Southport was therefore hailed with delight by all the members of the church, and by Mr. Coop particularly.

While Mr. Garrison's presence gave Mr. Coop great joy, it was not long until this was mixed with a great sorrow. It became evident that the wife of the evangelist at Chester (Mrs. Todd) was rapidly sinking, and, as a consequence, it would be necessary for her husband to

return with her to America in the hope of saving her life. This was accordingly arranged by having another evangelist, J. M. Van Horn, M.A., come over to take Mr. Todd's place. A tea meeting was held at Chester in the City Hall, on June 13th (1881), for the purpose of bidding Mr. Todd farewell, and of welcoming the new pastor, Mr. Van Horn. The resignation of Mr. Todd was greatly felt by all the members of the church at Chester, as well as at many other places. But Mr. Van Horn entered upon his work with courage and earnestness, and soon gave promise that the American Board had been wise in the selection of the man to fill Mr. Todd's place.

Meantime, just before this, a new place of worship was opened at Southampton, where Mr. Earl was stationed. This building cost about £5,000 and Mr. Coop had given half of this, besides advancing the rest of the money needed to complete the house. At the public meeting on this opening occasion, Mr. Coop delivered an address, in which he specially urged the importance of Sunday-school work in connection with the place.

During the month of June (1881) Mr. Coop, in company with a friend, started on a journey through Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. They sailed from Hull to Hamburg, and while at Hamburg Mr. Coop remembered that he had formerly known a Mr. Oncken, a Baptist minister, who was earnestly engaged in religious work in that city. This minister had frequently visited England, and nearly

always, during his visit, had stopped awhile with Mr. Coop at his home, and worshipped with him at the church.

After Mr. Coop and his friend had become located at hotel in Hamburg, they went out to take a stroll through the streets. Neither one of them had ever been there before, and they were greatly interested in the city, and especially that part of it where the houses are built in the old-fashioned style. Suddenly stopping at one point, Mr. Coop said to his friend that possibly, by inquiring at some of the shops, he might be able to trace the whereabouts of his old friend Mr. Oncken. Without any further delay they walked into a drapery shop in front of them, and inquired if anyone there knew whether Mr. Oncken was then living in Hamburg. To their great astonishment, the gentleman addressed stated that he knew Mr. Oncken quite well, that he had been connected with his church, had been, indeed, one of the deacons, though at that time he was not directly associated with Mr. Oncken, as there had been a division, and he was then connected with those who had become dissatisfied with the old organisation.

Of course Mr. Coop was delighted to have been able thus most singularly, and, as he thought, providentially, to get on the track of his old friend at the very first inquiry. Indeed, Mr. Coop regarded this as an intimation to him that there was work for him to do in Hamburg. He accordingly made all necessary inquiries, and found that his old friend Mr. Oncken was in such delicate

health that it would not be wise for Mr. Coop to call upon him, though the gentleman who gave the information proposed to take Mr. Coop and his friend to call upon Mr. Oncken's successor, a Dr. Bickel, who was then editing a paper in Hamburg, and had practically the superintendency of a large number of German Baptist Churches.

Mr. Coop and his friend, in company with the gentleman who had given them the information, proceeded at once to call upon Dr. Bickel, and they were further surprised to find the Doctor was from the same city in America from which Mr. Coop's friend hailed, and that the Doctor felt under special obligations to a gentleman whom they both regarded as a mutual friend and brother. This was a new chord of sympathy, and the three Christian friends, thus providentially met together, had sweet fellowship in talking over the work of the Lord.

Nor did these curious coincidences stop here. Very soon after Mr. Coop and his friend had reached Copenhagen, they received intelligence that it was necessary for them to go to Paris at once, as the mission there required special attention. They immediately began their return journey, going from Hamburg to Paris by rail.

In their compartment of the train were two gentlemen from Sweden, both of whom were eminent ministers connected with religious work in that country. They knew Dr. Bickel well, one of them being a Baptist minister. With these gentlemen the two travellers had very pro-

fitable religious conversation until they reached Cologne, where they parted company. Indeed, from the time Mr. Coop and his friend landed in Hamburg until they reached home again, they were scarcely an hour idle, during any day, from religious work. They were either preaching the Gospel, teaching the Scriptures, or else considering the practical details connected with missions.

Mr. Coop had been greatly interested in a mission in Paris, but during this visit he almost lost hope that the mission would be a success; and although he helped to support it for a few years afterwards, he finally became convinced that unless the mission could be thoroughly reorganised it was quite useless to spend any further money upon it. He was a practical man, and when he saw that a work had not within itself the elements of success, however much he may have loved it, he was not inclined to spend either his time or money in trying to keep up a hopeless enterprise. He was accustomed to say that when a thing is evidently a failure, the best way to treat it is to get rid of it entirely. However, in the present case, largely through the influence of the friend who accompanied him on this visit, Mr. Coop was persuaded to continue his support to the Paris mission, even after he had lost all hope that it would accomplish anything commensurate with the outlay which had been bestowed upon it. And as proof of his anxiety to sustain the mission in Paris, he made a second special visit there in company with Evangelist J. H. Garrison, to



look into its affairs. After returning, he wrote a letter to the American Board recommending the continuance of the mission, which the Board agreed to. However, after a short time had elapsed, it became evident to Mr. Coop that the mission could not be made successful under the management of those who then had it in charge. He now gave the matter up entirely, so far as he was concerned, and it was not very long until the American Board withdrew its support.

After returning from the trip to Copenhagen, it was decided to have a conference of delegates from churches in order to form an association for co-operation in evangelistic work. This meeting was held at Helsby, Cheshire, on August 1st, 1881, and was attended by large delegations, especially from Chester, Liverpool, and Southport.

After a number of addresses, the chief of which was delivered by the distinguished Evangelist, Mr. Henry Varley, the following resolution, proposed by Evangelist J. H. Garrison, and seconded by Mr. Coop, was unanimously adopted :—

“The members of the Churches of Christ at Chester, Liverpool, and Southport,—congregations under the care of American Evangelists, and co-operating with the Foreign Christian Missionary Society in the United States,—in social and religious conference assembled at Helsby, August 1st, 1881, feeling deeply the need of that fraternal intercourse, brotherly sympathy, and hearty co-operation which characterised the primitive disciples,





PRESIDENT J. A. GARFIELD.

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and which indeed are the outgrowth of the religion of Christ, and finding ourselves, contrary to our wishes, shut out from the fellowship and co-operation of those whose sympathy and aid we had reason to expect, and whom we must still regard and treat as brethren, having met together for social and religious purposes, and to cultivate that oneness of heart and soul which befits those having a common aim and a common work, do hereby express it as our desire and judgment that such a meeting should be held annually at such time and place as may be agreed upon, having for its object not the exercise of legislative or ecclesiastical functions, but the cultivation of personal religion and the extension of the Redeemer's cause. We furthermore cordially invite all who sympathise with and approve the principles of religious reformation for which we are pleading, to unite with us in these meetings. In the furtherance of this object, that a committee be appointed by the present meeting to make all necessary arrangements for the next one, and that this be submitted to the congregations co-operating, or that may desire to co-operate with us, for approval or rejection."

Another important event in connection with the life of Mr. Coop happened during this year. On July 2nd, President Garfield was shot at Washington by Guiteau, and died on September 19th following.

It will be remembered that Mr. Coop felt more indebted to General Garfield than to any other man for leading him to a proper understanding of the plea which the Disciples make, and especially the religious liberty for which they have always contended. It is not surprising, therefore, that Mr. Coop was deeply affected by the long struggle which the President made

after he had been shot by the assassin. Soon after he heard of the shooting of the President, in harmony with his deep sympathy, he suggested the propriety of the churches connected with the recently formed association sending a letter of Christian condolence to Mrs. Garfield, and at the same time a substantial contribution to the building of a new place of worship which had been undertaken by the Disciples of the United States for the occupancy of the church at Washington, of which General Garfield was a member. Mr. Coop was appointed to write this letter, and it was as follows :—

“BETHANY HOUSE, SOUTHPORT, ENGLAND,

“*July 12th, 1881.*

“DEAR SISTER,—I feel sure you will pardon the liberty I take in addressing you a few lines at this time. We heard, with inexpressible sorrow, of the attempt to take the life of your honoured husband. I believe that all my countrymen, without regard to either religious or political creed, have been deeply moved by this sad incident, and most heartily sympathise with you and the American people in this terrible affliction. But I think I am justified in saying that the Church with which I stand identified feel a special interest in this matter. They recognise in your distinguished and respected husband, not only the high qualities of mind and heart which are so generally attributed to him, but they also recognise in him a Divine kinship, growing out of relations which have been formed by a common acceptance of the Gospel of Christ. This is the most sacred of all relationships, and it is this that has moved your brethren in Christ in this country to send you this letter of sympathy and consolation.

“Last week, four of the churches here—churches planted and supported largely by aid from brethren in America, with which you and your husband are organically associated—decided to send you a letter, offering their sincere condolence in your great affliction, and at the same time giving some small token of their deep thankfulness for the providential preservation of your husband’s life. And, believing that nothing would be more grateful to your feelings, they decided to send a contribution to the Washington Church of Christ Building Fund, to be used in the erection of a new house of worship for the Church where you regularly attend. I therefore have pleasure in forwarding with this letter the sum of £100, as the result of last Lord’s Day’s collections in the following churches: Church of Christ, Southampton; Church of Christ, Chester; Church of Christ, Southport; and Church of Christ, Liverpool.

“We trust that this small contribution will be joyfully accepted by you as a grateful offering to our Heavenly Father for His goodness in saving your husband’s life, and that you will as joyfully appropriate it to what we trust will be for the honour and glory of our common Lord.

“Please to tender our hearty sympathy to your dear husband, and assure him that while he is passing under the rod, his noble bearing, his Christian patience, his words of faith and hope, and his supreme devotion to the Divine will, have been eloquently and effectually preaching to the entire civilised world.

“With sincere Christian regards to the stricken one,

• “I am your brother in Christ,

“T. COOP.”

But the hopes expressed in this letter were not realised. The brave struggle of the President came to an end, and it would perhaps be difficult to find an

instance of a more heroic contest with death. From the moment he was stricken down to the tragic end the President challenged universal admiration for his calm courage, his patient endurance, and sublime Christian resignation. His faith in God was always equal to the darkest hour ; his courage never trembled in the presence of the heaviest trial, nor did his patience fail him, though frequently subjected to the severest bodily pain. Surely such an example of living and dying must have exerted a powerful influence upon his countrymen, to whose interests specially his useful life had been devoted. Nor was the influence of such an example to end with the American people. It is safe to say that no death in this century produced such profound and wide-spread sympathy. A Paris paper headed an article on the death of the President with these significant words, "The Globe in Mourning ;" while the Press everywhere repeated this sentiment in some form or other. And in no country was the public heart more certainly touched, or were the expressions of sympathy more universal, than in that over which the noble Queen presides, whose tender and heartfelt message to Mrs. Garfield added a new lustre to her splendid womanly nature. In every part of the United Kingdom there was but one voice. Political, religious, and social differences were entirely lost sight of in the presence of the <sup>sac-</sup>common grief. And this feeling was so evidently <sup>breth-</sup>ine that the hearts of Americans residing in sympathy

England were deeply moved by the touching expressions of sympathy which they heard on every side.

It may be asked, How did President Garfield gain such an influence over the civilised world? The following may suffice to indicate somewhat at least the grounds on which the universal respect was based.

1. No machine politician could have gained such universal sympathy. The *motive* of General Garfield's political life underlies much of the respect which was shown to him while living, and is now so lavishly accorded to his memory. His brave and manly fight against corruption, and his sincere efforts on behalf of political reform, at once challenged the respect of the better class of people in all countries. Nor will his example be lost in this regard. Though dead, he yet speaketh. It may be that the work of purification will not now go forward as rapidly as it would have done under the guidance of his strong and steady hand, but it will not likely go back again to where it was when he entered upon his presidential duties. His administration, though short-lived, was, so far as American politics is concerned, in the nature of a revolution, and revolutions do not go backward, especially when they are sanctified by the martyrdom of their leaders.

2. The sanctity of President Garfield's home life had no little share of influence in creating the public sentiment which was so universal. One reason why the death of the late Prince Consort was so deeply lamented



was evidently because of the sanctity of his home life. It was his tender relation to his wife and children, his unaffected devotion to his family, that touched a common chord of sympathy in so many hearts. Tyrants in the home circle may be feared, but they will not be loved. Nor will unfaithfulness in the family gain general respect, however it may be excused by even those who have no sympathy with it. The unaffected devotion in General Garfield's family was the starting-point of much of the interest that has been felt on his behalf. Had there been that indifference between him and his wife which, unhappily, is too often manifested in the higher circles, the interest in his tragic death would never have reached the climax it did. Surely this lesson should not be lost. Let Government officials learn from the important fact to which attention is called, that however great their fame may be in other respects, they can never in any high degree secure the love of mankind without a sacred regard for family obligation, and an earnest devotion to the development of the quieter and nobler virtues of home life.

3. The crowning fact in President Garfield's life is yet to be stated. He was a Christian. That simple sentence tells the story of his widespread popularity. He was a Christian, too, without the pretence of the tinselled drapery of ritualism, without the stiffness of formalism, without the bigotry of sectarianism, and without the coldness of indifferentism. He was simply

a Christian, unaffected, hearty, liberal, earnest. His was an intelligent faith. From his youth the Word of God had been his constant companion. It dwelt in him richly; it was sweet to him as honey and the honeycomb. He was too honest to be a latitudinarian, and too generous to be a sectarian. His reverence for the Bible held him strictly within the lines of evangelical truth, while his broad sympathies made it impossible for him to become a bigot. Hence, while he earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints, he was never uncharitable towards those whose religious views were different from his. It can safely be stated that his religious character more than anything else gained for him the confidence and respect which have been so universally accorded. And it is not too much to say, that he will be known in history as the Christian statesman whose religious convictions were too deep for trifling with responsibility, and whose Christian charity was too broad to allow any room for personal resentment.

No wonder that in the presence of the death of such a man the nations wept. General Garfield's character may be summed up in one word, viz. *manliness*. But manliness is not attainable in the highest degree without Christianity. His was a manliness of the highest type. While it was polished with a generous culture, it was lit up and warmed by the spirit of the Divine Master; and while it had the symmetry and comeliness which a

wide experience and constant contact with books and men of letters always secure, its strength and breadth, its real heart and life, came from the President's supreme devotion to the Christian religion. It was faith in the Christ which gave General Garfield's character that completeness which put him practically beyond the successful criticism of even his bitterest opponents. And this Christian character is worth something to the age. Shining as it did from the highest position, its light penetrated every part of the civilised world.

While on personal grounds the death of General Garfield was a source of great regret to Mr. Coop, he could not help feeling that, after all, his death might turn out to be of more real advantage to the world than even his useful life had been. This view of the matter was with Mr. Coop a strong conviction. He felt that the heroic struggle of the President with death had brought out before the whole civilised world his transcendent faith in a manner which was sure to impress the world with the reality of the religion of Christ. Doubtless there was much truth in this conviction. The President's religion was the chief thing prominently brought to light during the entire time of his illness, and when it became generally known that he was identified with the religious people known as "Disciples of Christ," or "Churches of Christ," this fact of itself drew special attention to their principles and aims, and gave their religious movement an importance which

it had never attained before. Mr. Coop felt a just pride in being religiously associated with such a noble character.

In September of this same year, services were begun at the Kensington Town Hall, London. These services were well attended, and soon a very decided interest was manifested in the simplicity of the Gospel as it was preached there by one of the American evangelists. Mr. Coop was again delighted. He had for several years been anxious to have a work started in the metropolis on the lines of his new methods. While his old brethren had two or three places in different parts of London, the whole number of members was not much larger at this time than twenty or thirty years previously. Mr. Coop did not now stop to account for the slow progress that had been made. He started into the new movement with no desire to find fault with the past, his whole purpose being simply to improve on past methods, as far as this was practicable. He saw, at any rate, one thing very clearly, and that was the absolute need of a spirit of enterprise and sacrifice if anything was to be accomplished in a place like London. Hence he was pleased that one of the best halls in the metropolis had been taken, and that this was well filled at all the services with intelligent and anxious hearers.

But he was not satisfied with even so propitious a beginning as that at the Kensington Town Hall. Having now gained a hearing in the metropolis, he was anxious

that the Gospel in its purity and simplicity should be preached to the whole United Kingdom. Nor was he willing to wait for evangelists to visit the various towns and cities for this purpose. He thought he saw how at least something might be done in quite another way.

This led him to consider the propriety of publishing a religious journal from the metropolis, on broad and liberal lines, though at the same time true to the general principles and aims which he had in view. He did not wish this journal to take on a denominational type in any sense whatever, and, therefore, he did not wish it to be distinctly devoted to the plea which he and his friends were making. He felt that he would be satisfied if it presented a faithful record of religious work done in all the denominations, provided at the same time, in its editorial department it earnestly set forth a true plea for Christian unity, on the "one foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself, being the chief corner stone."

With this notion deeply rooted in his mind, he soon placed himself in communication with friends who sympathised with his view, and the result of mutual conference was that on October 20th, 1881, the first number of a weekly journal, entitled *The Christian Commonwealth*, was issued through the firm of S. W. Partridge & Co., 9, Paternoster Row, E.C.

This journal attracted very general attention from its

first issue. Its motto was, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good ;" and its distinctive aim was to advocate "good, right, and truth throughout the world." The general scope of the journal was indicated in the following paragraph from the leading article of the first number :—

"We cannot be sectarian or denominational, for the simple and sufficient reason that we labour to advance everywhere the unity of the Church of Christ. Nevertheless, we trust always to be animated by a spirit of generous consideration toward the various evangelical bodies, witnessing before all that Christ Jesus only is the Head and rallying centre of His Church, and that He hath said, 'One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.'"

It was soon found, however, that the starting of such a journal involved a much larger financial responsibility than was at first supposed. Indeed, it was not more than three or four weeks after the issue of the first number until it was discovered that a very serious mistake had been made in the estimates of the paper on which the journal was printed. When this mistake was corrected, it was found that the expense of actual production was at least one third more than was calculated by the publishers in their original estimates ; and while this mistake was no fault of Mr. Coop or his friends, they at once saw that they could not conscientiously hold the publishers to a contract which would be ruinous to them. They, therefore, at once

agreed to accept the necessary correction, and assume the additional responsibility involved.

This increase of the expense required a much larger sacrifice than any one at first supposed would be necessary, but Mr. Coop was not the man to put his hand to the plough and then look back. He had started in a great enterprise, and though very soon tempted by the Evil One, to hesitate in the manner indicated, he commanded Satan to get behind him, and immediately resolved to furnish the capital himself, if it could not be obtained from any other source, to make the journal a success.

And in counting the probability that he might have to stand in the breach alone, he was not altogether mistaken. While a few others helped in the beginning, it was not long before he had to carry the whole financial responsibility; and in this crisis he showed a faith which was truly sublime. He himself knew little or nothing about practical journalism, and he was always slow to engage in any enterprise which he did not understand. But in this case he was evidently walking by faith. Having decided in his own mind that the work was of the Lord, he determined to furnish the means to carry it on as long<sup>9</sup> as he was able to do so; and this he did without ever complaining a single time. He watched the progress of the journal with intense interest, and became so absorbed in its fortunes that for the next few years he gave a great deal of

his time to conference and work in connection with it. He made frequent visits to London, and was greatly helpful by his advice, especially in the business department.

He also took the liveliest interest in all its leading articles. He felt that the paper was doing an educational work in several directions of the greatest importance. Its firm advocacy of temperance and social reform, as well as its faithful teaching concerning the Gospel and the churches, challenged his highest admiration ; and it was with the greatest delight that he saw its circulation steadily increasing and its influence gradually extending.

He himself did not write for it, or even attempt to do so, except to send an occasional letter. During the first volume there was a discussion by bishops, canons, clergymen, M.P's, University and college professors, nonconformist ministers, and others on the question, "Why do not the people attend public worship?" Mr. Coop contributed one letter to this discussion, and this is so characteristic, as well as suggestive, that it is deemed proper to give it entire. It was written from Bishop Teignton, South Devon, where Mr. Coop was stopping for a time for the benefit of his health.

•  
CONCERNING TITHES, THE FELLOWSHIP, ETC.

"SIRS,—Having read nearly all the letters concerning the religious census which have appeared in your excellent journal, I beg leave to offer a few reflections upon the subject, as it appears to me. I like the freedom of discussion which you have



granted, and the good spirit which has been manifested by the various writers while presenting such contrariety of views.

“The present writer ventures to suggest two reasons as the foundation of what has been called the religious indifference.

“1. The crime of our Government in professing to be a Christian Government.

“2. The neglect or oversight by the Churches of the fellowship which was divinely appointed.

“A few words as to the first point. We boast over all nations of our observance of the Lord's Day, and of our good government. But to my mind we are the most guilty nation on the face of the earth, when we take into account our drinking habits. Think of our having a law which compels all tradesmen to close their business houses on the Lord's Day, except the publican, while he is sustained and protected! Surely we cannot be truthfully called a Christian nation while this is the case.

“But it is the second point to which I wish to call special attention. When Abraham met Melchisedek he acknowledged the principle of giving ten per cent. to the worship of God. In the Book of Genesis, xiv. 20, after receiving a blessing from the priest, Abraham gave him tithes of all. And in the 28th chapter, in the dream of Jacob, when God gave him the promise of the land, and his seed, Jacob vowed a vow, saying, ‘If God will be with me and keep me, I will surely give a tenth unto Thee.’ Again, in Deut. xii. 5, 6, it is said, ‘In the place which the Lord shall choose ye shall bring your tithes and offerings.’ And in 2 Chron. xxxi. 10 what a remarkable testimony we have: ‘Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord we have had enough to eat and have left plenty, for the Lord hath blessed His people, and that which is left is this great store.’ Some 329 years after this, the people and the priest had gone astray, and God said, ‘Ye are gone away from My ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me and I will return unto you,

saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? *Shall a man rob God?* Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.' Now what was to be done? Listen: 'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.'

"Some of your readers may say that these were temporal blessings to the Jews, and have nothing to do with us as Christians. But what said the Great Teacher, who spake as never man spake? He gave us great principles, not methods. Here are a few samples: 'Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven;' 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Read the case of the woman with the box of ointment; also the poor woman who put in two mites.

"Look now at the result of the Saviour's teaching when it comes to be specially applied under the apostolic ministry. We find the primitive converts sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. Neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessed of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price, and laid it at the Apostles feet. But soon the devil got amongst them, and one man, who thought he would show off, sold his possessions, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it. But what did Peter say when this man brought only a part? 'Ananias, why has Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?' And now comes in an important principle—viz., the right of private property, or rather the question of stewardship. While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God

And Ananias, hearing these things, fell down dead, and afterwards his wife also.

“I now call attention to Acts ii. 42: ‘They continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.’ There were four things which they steadfastly attended to—1st, the Apostles’ doctrine; 2nd, the fellowship; 3rd, the breaking of bread; 4th, the prayers. In the first is contained all the Apostles’ teaching. The second is the collection or tithes—the commune of goods. The third the weekly communion, or sacrament, or the Lord’s Supper. The fourth the common duty and privilege of praying with and for one another.

“Referring now to the second item, let me ask who carries out the fellowship in these days? What church or churches would be found guiltless in reference to this matter? Travelling some time ago in America, and passing through the Mormon city, or as they call themselves the Latter Day Saints, I was surprised to find that so few and such poor people had made such a desert place to blossom as a rose. I was also surprised to find it such a well-ordered city, and containing so many splendid buildings, with fine business offices fitted up in the best and most modern style. And on inquiry I was told that they were the offices of the Mormons, where the people came to pay their tithes and offerings. I went through their large tabernacle, which will seat 12,000 persons, and in case of fire can be emptied in one minute and a half. In this was one of the largest organs in the world. My curiosity was aroused to ascertain how all this work had been done and paid for by themselves, and I was given to understand that every Mormon gave at least ten per cent. of his income, thus illustrating the principle of the tithes and fellowship to which I have called attention. They are also building a new temple of granite, and had then 500 stone and granite masons employed at £3 per week.

What was it that gave strength and stability to the Wesleyan movement? Some will say a penny a week. But how superior the Mormon practice of ten per cent. ! But, after all, the question is not what the Mormon or Wesleyan teachers say, but what says the Word of the Lord. Read that grand chapter of the Apostle Paul's, 1 Cor. xv. What a magnificent ending it has ! What a splendid climax he reaches in the victory over death and the grave ! But he immediately changes to practical matters ; as much as to say, having now demonstrated the superiority of the Christian religion, let us be willing to sacrifice for it. Hence he goes straight to the collection, and commands that on the first day of the week every one should lay by in store as God had prospered him. This was not like our modern method. Many give now only on special occasions, or when some great preacher is present. But Paul wanted a regular habit of giving established, so that there need be no gathering when he came. And the principle of giving was according as God had prospered each one.

“ But some one may ask, What has all this to do with empty churches and chapels ? I think very much. God will never prosper either Church or State where there is constant and persistent departure from His commandments. The professed Christians have now gone away from the apostolic order, and the result is many have become sickly and weak. Think of what could be accomplished if all who now profess to be Christians would give one-tenth of their income. Missionaries could be sent to every part of the world, and a thousand agencies for the dissemination of light and knowledge could be put into operation which are now hindered for the want of means. If the habits of drink and many others were cut off, and the means expended in this direction turned into the Lord's treasury, and all these means wisely used for the honour of His glorious name, it would not require many years to demonstrate that when we return to the

Lord, and bring our offerings with us, He will open the windows of heaven and shower a blessing upon us, as He promised concerning His ancient people.

“Yours truly,

“T. COOP.

“*March 23rd, 1882.*”

To those who knew Mr. Coop, the contents of the foregoing letter will not be surprising. It is doubtful whether any other man of his day felt more keenly his stewardship than Mr. Coop. At the time he wrote this letter he was probably contributing to religious and social works not less than £5,000 a-year, if not his entire income. It is at least well known that the ten per cent. of which he speaks was practically only a small portion of what he felt to be his own responsibility. Indeed, he was giving to almost every worthy enterprise around him, and he measured his responsibility only by the limitation of his means. No wonder he pressed the importance of making sacrifices in order to the success of Christian work. He did not lecture others from the storehouse of his own selfishness, but he constantly gave a practical demonstration of the faith that was in him by responding liberally to every appeal which he regarded as worthy of assistance. Nevertheless, he did not forget the apostolic injunction. While he did “good to all men as he had opportunity,” he felt that his first duty was to the “household of faith;” consequently, he contributed most liberally to such enterprises as he thought were necessary in order to establish the religious principles

which he regarded as most faithful to New Testament teaching.

The year before the *Christian Commonwealth* was started, Mr. Coop was appointed a Wigan Borough Magistrate ; but on account of his almost incessant travels at that time, and also his feeble health, he did not very frequently assume the practical responsibility of his office. However, he did occasionally hear cases, and when he did, he always gave evidence of that clear insight, rapid combination of facts, and unbiassed judgment for which he was distinguished in all of his dealings. In this office his practical common sense was especially manifested ; but he did more to help his fellow-citizens avoid going to law than in helping them after they had made their appeal to it. He was a friend to every one who was in trouble, and he was never too busy to hear the case of any worthy person ; and, generally speaking, he was able to find a practical solution of the difficulty, whatever it may have been.

From this time until his last journey to America, he was engaged chiefly in visiting the churches and in travelling, occasionally going to the Continent as well as to America. All this time his health was very feeble, and sometimes was almost despaired of by his friends. But his active interest in religious work seemed to grow stronger as his physical condition became weaker. He was constantly on the look-out for some new opening where work could be done for his Master.

Reference has already been made to the illness of Mrs. Todd, and her return with her husband to America. Soon after she reached her native land this illness terminated fatally, and in a little while thereafter Mr. Todd returned to this country, and took charge of a work at Liverpool, which had been started there in the St. James's Hall, Lime Street, on April 18th, 1880. Some time afterwards Mr. Todd married a second time.

This return of Mr. Todd gave Mr. Coop great pleasure, and in a little time the church in Liverpool began to grow so rapidly that it was decided to build a permanent place of worship in Upper Parliament Street. But soon after this house was opened Mr. Todd's health failed, and when a short stay at Mentone failed to restore his health, he returned to America, and soon thereafter fell a victim to the same disease which had afflicted his first wife. He was succeeded at Liverpool by Evangelist A. Martin, who was at the time of Mr. Todd's death labouring in Birkenhead.

The loss of Mr. Todd was deeply felt by the churches connected with the Association in this country, and especially by the churches at Liverpool and Chester which Mr. Todd had so faithfully served. He was a man of great ability, sublime courage, and unfaltering trust. He was withal thoroughly genuine; his motives were as clear as sunshine, and his whole character childlike in its simplicity, though he had the strength of a lion when thoroughly aroused. His success in Chester, an

old cathedral town, was really phenomenal ; while when he was stricken he was laying the foundations of an equally great work in Liverpool.

As a controversialist and biblical exegete he had few equals. His reply to the Bishop of Liverpool on the action, subject, and design of baptism is one of the most masterly productions of the kind in any language. The pamphlet has had a wide circulation, more than 5,000 copies being sold within a few months after its publication. Among the American evangelists who have laboured in this country, no one's memory is more revered than Mr. Todd's, and his loss to the work here was doubtless rightfully regarded by Mr. Coop as almost irreparable.

It has already been stated that Mr. Van Horn succeeded Mr. Todd at Chester, but after serving the church there with great acceptance for several years, in 1886 he tendered his resignation and opened up a work at the Music Hall in Birkenhead. From the very first this work was an assured success. The Hall has been crowded at almost every service since that time, and a church has now been organised consisting of about one hundred and sixty members, though both Mr. Van Horn and wife have latterly been in feeble health.

Since the year 1881, when the first service was held in the Kensington Town Hall, the work has continued to grow in the metropolis. In 1882, the evangelist

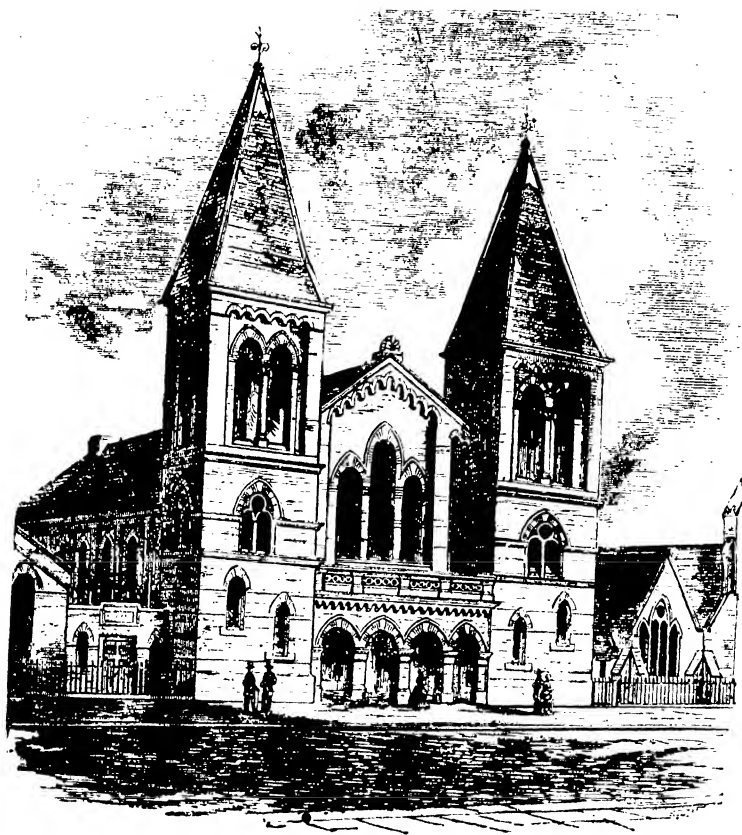


preaching in the Hall was unanimously invited to the pastorate of the West London Tabernacle, Notting Hill, a church organised and built up through the labours of Mr. Henry Varley, the distinguished evangelist, who is well known throughout the world among English-speaking people. As the Tabernacle was located in the neighbourhood of the Hall, some of the results of the work at the Hall were transferred to the Tabernacle.

Soon other places were opened up through men who had come into the movement. The first of these was at Mornington Chapel, in Hampstead Road, a place that had been built for the Rev. T. T. Lynch, a distinguished Congregational minister. This work was begun and carried on successfully by William Durban, B.A., a graduate of the London University, a man of excellent character and fine scholarly attainments, who was pastor of a Baptist Church in Chester when Mr. Todd began his work there. However, some time after this Mr. Durban resigned his pastorate in Chester, and removed to London, and soon became identified with the new movement.

Still other places followed this in succession, until the whole number opened in London, as published in the Annual Report of the Christian Association for 1888, is stated as six, with an estimated membership of nearly 700.

Thus it will be seen that in about seven years six London churches have joined the Association, and the



WEST LONDON TABERNACLE, NOTTING HILL.



movement has gained a good footing in the metropolis, and has gathered about it a number of most excellent preachers, such as W. Durban, B.A., Dr. John W. Kirton, John Maxted, T. R. Hodgkinson, S. Trevor Francis, James Sprunt, etc., with a number of other earnest and efficient workers as can be found in any of the churches throughout the country. A. J. L. Gliddon is now the pastor of the Mornington Road Church, Southport, where Mr. Coop held his membership.

On October 18th, 1883, Mr. Frank Coop was married to Miss Mary B., daughter of Mr. W. S. Dickinson, of Cincinnati, U.S.A., and grand-daughter of Ex-Governor R. M. Bishop, of Ohio. On his return from the United States, after his marriage, the employés of the firm of Coop & Co. had the entire premises most elaborately decorated in every department, and lit up with electric light, and presented Mr. Frank and his wife with a beautiful drawing-room timepiece, giving another illustration of the interest which the employés have always felt in the members of the firm and those immediately associated with them. Also about this time Mr. Frank ~~was~~ taken into the partnership of the firm; and when this was accomplished Mr. Coop felt very little more anxiety about his business affairs. His own children were now all married and settled; they were all Christians and had married Christians, and he had therefore every reason to be thankful for the blessings which had attended his immediate family.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### LAST VISIT TO AMERICA—DEATH AND CHARACTER.

ON August 14th, 1886, Mr. Coop, in company with his wife and son Joe, set sail for America for the last time. After visiting his step-children, who were then residing at Cincinnati, and remaining with them for a time, he began to move about among the churches, and finally attended the General Christian Convention, which was held in October at Kansas City. This Convention was a great gathering, and the spirit of it was everything that could be desired. The effect upon Mr. Coop's mind was very inspiring, though his joy was tinged with something of sadness when he remembered what *might have been* in his own country had wise methods been adopted in evangelistic and church work. Nevertheless, his whole soul was full of delight in view of the enthusiastic interest of the American brethren in the work which he was so liberally supporting in England. In writing to one of the evangelists in England concerning the Convention, he expresses a very earnest hope that the American churches will help the work in England, until it gets fairly established. He also expresses his increased

interest in American institutions and the people, and intimates that he is more and more astonished at the progress which is everywhere manifested throughout the length and breadth of the country.

This was the last General Convention he ever attended. From here, in company with Dr. S. McBride, who had just returned to America from England, he went on to Wichita, Kansas, where he remained during some evangelistic services which Dr. McBride held at that place. Mr. Coop was greatly interested in the success of these meetings.

Dr. McBride was originally a Presbyterian minister, but having attended the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Belfast, and having visited Palestine and Egypt, he was, on his return to London, baptized at the West London Tabernacle, and had continued to work with the evangelists of the Christian Association until his return to America. Mr. Coop was anxious that the Doctor should receive a hearty reception among the American brethren, and, consequently, he felt it his duty to go with him to Wichita, and help him in the proposed services.

These services were a decided success, and Mr. Coop accordingly rejoiced very much. But he had got a taste of Wichita in quite another respect. He found that the brethren there were engaged in building a university, which was to bear the name of the lamented President Garfield, and this name was sufficient to at once enlist Mr. Coop's sympathies on its behalf. After making

some inquiries about the prospects of the university, he found that it was greatly in need of funds, in order to carry to successful completion the plans which had been proposed.

This was quite enough for Mr. Coop to know. He saw at a glance precisely what the situation was, and what was needed to make the enterprise a success ; and as his whole object in living was to do good, he thought he saw an opportunity to make himself eminently useful in a work which promised to do much for the cause which was so near his heart. He accordingly made up his mind to stop at Wichita for the time, and was not long before he settled upon a plan of operations. He thought he saw a clear way by which he could help the university to all the funds that were immediately needed.

He found a large and flourishing church there of about four hundred members. Nine of these had been incorporated into a Board, and had obtained a charter to build Garfield University. They had obtained one hundred and forty acres of land, and the owner of the next lot, to induce them to build on that site, gave them ten acres, besides paying one-third of the cost of the one hundred and forty acres and the cost of grading and making the streets ; so that the whole land was laid out for building plots. The university building was to cost not less than £21,000. Fourteen acres, were reserved for the use of the university, as well as ten acres of woodland for picnics. These ten acres were mortgaged for a sum amounting to



GARFIELD UNIVERSITY, WICHITA, U.S.A.





the whole cost of the land, and were said to be worth at that time about £4,000 more than the money advanced, so that the trustees had the whole of the remaining land for sale. They had already sold one-tenth of the land for £5,000. Mr. Coop purchased part of this university land, and began to improve it, with a view to selling it again in single lots to persons to build upon the same. And it will help to understand his enthusiasm in this matter, if it is stated that at that time there was what Americans call a "boom" at Wichita in land speculation.

The land which Mr. Coop secured seemed to be admirably located for his purpose, and, considering the price of land at that time, it was generally believed that his purchase was likely to yield a large profit. This profit he intended, if realised, should go to the benefit of the university which had been started as a memorial of the late President Garfield. He now set himself earnestly to work in improving his land—laying out streets, avenues, planting trees, etc.

About this time, writing to a friend in London, he says he never was happier in his life. He found the climate of Wichita just suited him, and as Kansas was a Prohibition State, he had for this reason a strong confidence in any investments which he made there. In the same letter referred to he mentions the reason why Wichita is so prosperous. He says, "The people are all sober, hard-working, energetic, and they save the money that would be spent in drink; and the consequence is

they are flush with money, and are looking out for corner lots." He further says that "all the places of worship are crowded out, and that the churches are extending and building new schools, etc, while not less than four universities are projected, all of them to be located in large and splendid buildings."

It is not necessary to state to those who knew Mr. Coop that this prospect would be very attractive to him. He was in fact literally absorbed in his new enterprise. Day after day he watched the gradual rising of the university walls, and constantly noticed the progress which was daily made in almost every direction. It is not surprising, therefore, that he did not think of returning to England as soon as he expected when he left home. He had found congenial work, and as there was no particular occasion calling him back to his native country, he determined to prosecute his plans at Wichita until he had achieved the success which he felt sure would finally come.

But no matter how much absorbed in business, he was not forgetful of his loved ones. His stepson, John Robert Gandy, had been stricken down with hæmorrhage of the lungs, and was with his mother spending some time at Ashville, South Carolina, where he had gone to get a change of climate. Growing worse, however, Mr. Coop had been requested to visit him, and he accordingly cut loose from Wichita and went to the bedside of his stepson.

He remained at Ashville until his stepson showed some improvement. He then determined to return to Wichita and resume his work. Among the last letters which he wrote is the following to this sick son. While it contains some family references which may not be understood by readers generally, there is not a line in it which does not exhibit Mr. Coop's true character, and especially his deep sympathy with the afflicted. After Mr. Coop's death this stepson finally returned to England with his mother, but did not live very long after reaching his native country. The letter is as follows :

"WINFIELD, *April 16th*, 1887.

"MY DEAR JOHN ROBERT,—Your very interesting letter was forwarded from Wichita to this place, and I hasten to send you a few lines by next post. I was indeed glad to see your handwriting, but so long a letter I fear was too much for you, so many things to write about. I was glad to know my coming over had helped you in any way, and given you any comfort in this trial of affliction. My visit to Wichita has been a wonderful experience, and what will come out of it no one knows. You are more than welcome for the little service Fred and I did at Mitchell's; it was closed up better than I anticipated, and everyone expressed thanks at the finish. I have been very glad I have been enabled to get along so well all the winter while your dear mother has been such a comfort to you. I do hope you will be guided and sustained in your return to Cincinnati. Like you, I feel sorry for Joe; I fear unless he at once gives up he will gradually sink. I have had several letters from Fred, and I expected him before now, but I wrote him not to be in a hurry, and yesterday I had a telegram to say he did not know when he could leave—he had to be in court,

and was uncertain. I have been trying to draw my business here into as small a compass as possible, so that I can leave him to manage it if I should have to go away. Mr. Carr left Wichita two days ago; he is talking of closing up his business in New York and going to live in Wichita with his son Frank and his two daughters. The Garfield Managing Committee have offered to let me have a new house that was built for a professor at half price, next door to Professor Everest. I told them I would think it over, and look at it when finished; it is now complete all but papering. I had in view that Fred and I could live together if we can get a suitable housekeeper for a few weeks, till James and Eunice come, and then I shall want to be at liberty. I can find full work for Fred till he is properly initiated into the real estate business, and I think it will be a good opening for him if he only settles down. Poor boy! I do feel sorry for him; it has come just as I expected, he regrets he did not get married before leaving England. If he gets a Ruth that will settle down and not linger about the Old Country he will be happy. I am still in the dark about returning to England; it will principally depend upon my health. James wants me to go with him to California, and take the northern route by Winnipeg, Chicago, and Niagara Falls, but I do not think I could stand the whole of the journey. Then there are pressing letters for me to return home, so as to relieve Joe, etc. I shall look out carefully for the openings of Providence, and when I see the opening I shall try to walk in it. I am reminded of the word of the blessed Lord, 'Take no thought for the morrow,' so will leave it just there. I feel thankful at the prospect of no more toothache; my gums are getting healed up, and I hope very soon to have a cast taken. I get all the care and attention possible in food and all other comforts. I must now conclude, praying 'That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith,'

that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.'

"With love to all.

"Your affectionate father,

"T. COOP."

But the end, as regards Mr. Coop himself, was now rapidly approaching. Less than a month after this letter was written he was attacked by malarial fever, which enfeebled him so much that he could not regain his strength. He then suffered from an enlargement of the liver, which produced jaundice and confused his brain, causing him much suffering, and continued to grow worse until the end. Meantime, his wife, who had so faithfully nursed him through many serious attacks, was summoned to his bedside. At the same time, his son-in-law and partner, Mr. [Name], with his daughter Eunice, reached Wichita, and their efforts with those of his brave wife in [Name] never could be done to restore him to health. But in vain. Finally, on May 15th, 1887, he [Name] Jesus, Whom he had so long trusted as [Name] on and the Life.

His last hours  
H. W. Everest, Ch

sketched by Professor  
[Name] University, in an

address at the funeral, that it is well to use the Professor's own words. After giving a short sketch of Mr. Coop's life he said :—

“With such a life before us, concerning the death which was the end thereof and which made it immortal in its beauty and power, we need say but little. The life is everything; the death is nothing; nothing, whether it come by the lightning stroke or by the slow approaches of lingering disease; whether it break in upon the tranquillity of home, or bring rest to a weary wanderer in a land of strangers. And yet who would not like to know something concerning the last hours of this good man? About ten days ago he came into his own hired house, which stands in full view of the rising walls of Garfield University. By an almost special providence some of his family had crossed the sea and joined him there. Once more his wife and children were about him. He felt as though he could recover, and would be permitted to carry out his plans, and yet to a friend he said: ‘I am almost done; almost through. If it is the Lord's will that I should go, I do not want anyone to pray that I may live—not even a week.’ He expressed disappointment that he could not carry out his plans, but not a murmur indicated that he was not content. At first he could watch from his window the workmen at the university, speak of this and that element of architectural strength and beauty, and think, mayhap, of the portals and walls of the city of our God where the mansions are, and where he might soon find admission. Then he was unable to rise, and grew weaker day by day. For some hours he was a great sufferer; sleep brought him no refreshment, and he was tossed from side to side on the rough sea of death. At length nature's opiate made him unconscious of pain, and then great quiet and peace seemed to have descended upon him. That room where this good man died, where the wife bent over his dying pillow, and where his

children watched his slumber as he sank lower and lower into the deep stillness of death, was a solemn place, a holy place, the vestibule of heaven. At four o'clock he opened his eyes as if to look once more at the faces that bent over him, and then gently closed them in the last long sleep of the grave. Gently he passed away, gently as if borne aloft by angel hands; as gently as the night yielded to the glories of another Lord's Day. Then we remembered Him Who brought life and immortality to light, and Who said, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' Thanks be to God Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Thus ended the career of one of the truest, noblest and most useful men who have been numbered among the consecrated hosts of God; and the announcement of his death was received with the profoundest sorrow throughout a wide circle of Christian friends in both Europe and America.

The funeral services at Wichita were very impressive, a number of persons taking part in the same in the presence of a large congregation. The ladies of the church had beautifully decorated the building in the manner planned by the deceased before his death. The platform was decorated with flowers; in the rear of the pulpit was the very appropriate Scripture quotation, "He giveth His beloved sleep." The flowers were gracefully attended with draperies of white.

After the funeral, the remains were removed to Cincinnati, where another very impressive service was held at the Central Christian Church; and then all that was



mortal of this faithful servant of God was deposited in Spring Grove Cemetery, one of the most beautiful cemeteries on the face of the whole earth.

Memorial services were held in a number of churches throughout the United States and England, where touching tributes were paid to the memory of the departed.

Among the most impressive of these may be mentioned those at the Mornington Road Church, Southport, and the Rodney Street Chapel, Wigan. At the former place, Pastor Benjamin Wood (himself since deceased) presided, and gave a short address, in which he paid a touching tribute to the noble character of Mr. Coop, and declared that he did not belong, strictly speaking, to any one church, one town, or even to one country. At the same meeting Mr. John Crook, a member of the Sussex Road Church, delivered a touching address, in which he spoke of his acquaintance with Mr. Coop from the time of his own earliest childhood. He said he had been taught to respect and revere Mr. Coop's name from the beginning, and that feeling had grown up with him. He then gave some very interesting incidents in the life of Mr. Coop, and finally concluded by expressing his hearty sympathy with the family, and the great pleasure he felt in the fact that the sons of the deceased were worthily following in their father's footsteps. Mr. Van Horn, of Birkenhead, also spoke feelingly in the same strain ; while Mr. Ranicar, a deacon of the Rodney Street Church, Wigan, with whom Mr. Coop had

been formerly associated for many years in Christian work, bore unmistakable testimony to the great value of the character and work of the deceased. Mr. A. Martin, of Liverpool, followed in a similar strain, after which other addresses were made. The services, taken altogether, were of a deeply solemn and impressive character.

Memorial services were also held at the Rodney Street Chapel, Wigan, when a special discourse was delivered by Pastor Bartley Ellis, bearing upon Mr. Coop's life. Mr. Ellis took for his text Acts xiii. 36: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep." The discourse, which was an eloquent and impressive one, embraced a brief history of Mr. Coop's career; speaking of him as a religious and temperance reformer, and also as a philanthropist, and finally concluding with the following lessons to be derived from such a life. First, success in business is not incompatible with an earnest Christian life. He enforced this lesson upon the young men in the congregation, telling them that the best book to study to ensure success is the Bible. Second, that wealth acquired through success should be used for the wellbeing of mankind. Third, the supreme advantages of early piety and faithfulness to God's will.

This service at Rodney Street Chapel is especially important, in view of the somewhat strained relations between the church and Mr. Coop in the latter years of his life. However, it is only just to say that there never was any personal feeling on the part of the members of

the church against Mr. Coop. The members always had the highest regard for him as a man and Christian, their objection being entirely on account of his change of religious views.

The Southport, Wigan, and some of the other Lancashire papers had long and appreciative notices of Mr. Coop at the time of his death. The *Wigan Examiner* concludes a very interesting sketch as follows :—

“He was a man of great kindness of heart, and was a liberal contributor to every good work that commended itself to his judgment. He was deeply interested in the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, to which he had been a generous contributor. The illuminated clock which adorns the central tower of the noble building is itself a proof of his munificence.”

The *Wigan Observer* contained also a long and appreciative notice. The following reference to local matters will be interesting :—

“So far as the Borough of Wigan is concerned, he always evinced a great solicitude in all charitable undertakings. The promotion of the Public Hall Association was undoubtedly in a great measure due to Mr. Coop’s energy and public spirit, and in the initiative steps he was a prominent figure. One of the original trustees, he remained so until his death. His work in connection with the Public Hall was in part due to his temperance principles, which through life he consistently followed. He was one of the first directors of the Wigan Tramways Co., and this position he occupied until his absence from home prevented his giving that attention to his duties which was required. He was a man of strong determination, and possessed great individuality of character.”

The *Southport Guardian* contained an editorial notice, opening with the following sentence:—"In every sense of the word a noble benefactor and large-hearted Englishman has passed away." Then, after noticing his successful business career and his wide sympathies and devotion to the principles of the Liberal party, as well as his liberal views in regard to religious matters, the article concludes as follows:—"There were so many sides of usefulness in Mr. Coop's character that he will be sorely missed, and by the poor and helpless in particular."

On Thursday morning following his death references were made to the fact at the Wigan Borough Police Court. The Mayor said:—

"It is my painful duty, before we proceed with the business of the court, to refer to the loss of a brother magistrate by the lamented death of Mr. Timothy Coop. His was a career characteristic of the busy north, and may be summed up in the few words that coming to Wigan a poor lad he soon succeeded, by steady perseverance and energy, in establishing himself first as a retail and ultimately as a wholesale clothier in this town, and that he had the satisfaction of starting a new local industry by the establishing of the large factory in Dorning Street, which is so conspicuous to the traveller as he passes along the railway through Wigan. He did not, unfortunately, take part in public affairs. Had he done so, the town would doubtless have been benefited by the clear-headedness which enabled him to build up a fortune in his own business. He was, however, a prominent and ardent supporter of temperance principles, and in this character had a good deal to do with the erection of the Public Hall, for which I believe we chiefly have to thank the temperance reformers

of thirty years ago. He was appointed a magistrate of this borough seven years ago. He has, however, only very occasionally sat on the bench, as he has been but little in Wigan during the whole of that time, having travelled a great deal during the last ten years. And his death has now taken place during a visit to the United States, where he was, I believe, engaged in forwarding the erection of a college for the religious body to which he belonged, and to whose objects, I believe, he gave with a liberality which certainly was most marked. I trust that Wigan may yet see many follow Mr. Coop's example of industry and energy, and that we may see other industries developed in our midst by men of similar energy, originality, and perseverance. My brother magistrates desire to join with me in expressing our sympathy with Mrs. Coop and the family."

Mr. Benson said :—

"I feel very much the loss of our esteemed friend Mr. Coop. I have had the honour of associating with Mr. Coop for a number of years, and I may say I have always found him to be a straightforward and honourable gentleman, and I only wish that we may have more of the stamp of our late friend, for I am sure a greater benefactor, considering his position in life, has not resided in Wigan for a great many years past.

At the Annual Meeting of the Christian Association of Great Britain, held in August at the West London Tabernacle, the following resolution was offered by the Committee on Obituaries :—

"That the Association express its deep sorrow at the void created in its ranks by the death of our dear brother Timothy Coop: that it record its gratitude to God for his long life of Christian devotion and loving sacrifice, and that the secretary be requested to convey to our dear sister Mrs. Timothy Coop and

to the bereaved family an assurance of profound and prayerful sympathy with the bereaved circle."

This was carried amid profound silence, all the delegates standing to do honour to the memory of the departed.

And at the Annual Meeting of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, held at Indianapolis, U.S.A., on October 19th and 20th, in the report of the Obituary Committee the following reference is made to the deceased :—

"Timothy Coop, the faithful soldier of Christ, the devoted friend of missions, has been called from a useful and consecrated life of toil on earth to the peace and joy of heaven. By his zeal in behalf of missions, and his large work through this Society, his name has become a household word in the homes of Disciples, both in America and England. His liberality was as great as the bounty which Providence poured into his bosom. 'The liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall stand.' The Lord made him to increase in wealth, and he was neither an unwise nor an unfaithful steward. Princely as were his benefactions, they were inadequate, because only material manifestations of his princely spirit. Manifold were his good works, but his labours through this Society abounded. In its feeble beginnings, his wise counsel and his liberal contributions to its funds inspired a host to renewed and hopeful toil for the salvation of the heathen.

"We have had great preachers, great teachers, mighty leaders of God's hosts; but Timothy Coop was pre-eminently the great practical friend of missions, and as such he will for years to come be known in America and in England and in far distant lands.

"Timothy Coop, thy liberal hand lies pulseless on thy bosom; thy generous heart has ceased to beat; thy pure, manly face is no more seen in the assemblies of thy brethren on earth. Thou

didst follow thy Saviour in this stormy world—thou hast followed Him to the heavens. Is it too much to trust that when the loved of earth, who had passed before him, waited for him at the portals of the skies and gave him glad welcome the Redeemer welcomed him too, and said of him as of Nathanael of old, ‘Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile?’”

In closing the record of the eventful and useful life of Mr. Coop, it is not needful to say much more. His character has already been fully portrayed. His own deeds have spoken for him, and it is better that he should live in the memory of men through these deeds than through any colouring that may be given by an expression of opinion. Nevertheless, it is difficult to stay the pen from going on which has become accustomed to write about a man whose character was so inspiring and suggestive. And in the interests of the reader, who may wish to have something of a summary of his characteristics, it is thought well to look at the man as he now appears after having passed away from the busy scenes of the present life.

Mr. Coop was from almost any point of view an attractive character. He was one of those men who are really always a success, no matter what they undertake to do ; and there is nothing that commands respect more than success. In some professions everything depends upon this. In military life this is the only standard. However, Mr. Coop’s success was something more than mere winning battles or prosperity. He

was a character-builder, and first of all he was careful that his own character should be built rightly.

As a business man he was remarkable for foresight, comprehensiveness, perseverance, and integrity. He did not believe that anything could stand permanently that was not built upon a firm foundation, and consequently, honesty in business he regarded as the first essential element of enduring success. He was very energetic and hopeful, and these qualities largely contributed to his splendid achievements in building up one of the largest clothing manufacturing establishments in England, if not in the world.

He was eminently cosmopolitan. He was at home in almost any land or country. His taste for travel grew into a passion, and for the last few years of his life he seemed anxious to be moving nearly all the time. Indeed, it was only while he was at Wichita, deeply engaged in the great enterprise from which he expected large results in helping on religious and educational work, that he was at all satisfied to remain very long at one place. But he never travelled without a definite purpose in view. Indeed, he would not spend money to the amount of a penny unless he felt sure that it was wisely spent. This fact doubtless had much to do with his business success. However, when he was convinced that he could go on a mission for good, he was never happier than when he was moving from place to place.



Reference has already been made to the practical character of Mr. Coop's mind. This might be illustrated in many ways, but it was never more apparent than when he was discussing religious matters. On one occasion he was having an earnest conversation with a Baptist minister in reference to the design of baptism. The conversation took somewhat the following form. Mr. Coop wished to know of the minister how he would treat an earnest inquirer who asked him the way of salvation. "Suppose," said Mr. Coop, "such an inquirer were to come to you, and tell you that he had been hearing your preaching for some time, and was now anxious to be a Christian, what would you tell him to do?" The Baptist minister answered by saying that he would tell him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "But," said Mr. Coop, "suppose he says he does believe, would his answer be sufficient, and would you require nothing else?" The minister answered that he thought this would be quite sufficient, and opened his New Testament to that answer as recorded in Acts xvi. 31. "Then," said Mr. Coop, "you would require nothing else?" "I certainly would not," said the minister, "for the passage in question does not require anything else." "But," said Mr. Coop, "if we read a little further you will see that something else was done, for the jailer was the same hour of the night baptized, he and all his straightway." However, the minister insisted that the answer he had intimated was all that he was bound

to give to the inquirer since that is all the Apostles told the Philippian jailer to do. Mr. Coop insisted that in this his friend was mistaken, but waiving that point he turned to Acts ii. 38, and quoted Peter's answer to the Pentecostians, and then pointed out that faith was not mentioned there as a condition at all. "Now," said he, "we have here practically the same question asked, and yet faith is not a condition at all." "But," said the minister, "that passage is not applicable to an inquirer in these days; it was all right for the Jews, but it would not do for an answer to a Gentile inquirer." At that time Mr. Coop was using the minister's own Bible, and deliberately taking his knife from his pocket, he opened it and began to cut the passage out, when the minister caught his hand and protested. "But," said Mr. Coop, "if the passage is of no particular use why not cut it out? Let us get our Bible down to the exact dimensions needed, and then we will know precisely what we have to do and what we have not to do."

But the minister persisted that he would not have his Bible mutilated. Then Mr. Coop turned to the reply of Ananias to Saul, and pointed out to the minister that in this neither faith nor repentance was mentioned, and if his rule of interpretation could be trusted, then it was absolutely certain that all those passages where faith is not mentioned cannot be regarded as in any way related to the salvation of the sinner.

Mr. Coop then went on to explain that in all such cases the different circumstances must be taken into account, and when this is done, he contended that there can be no even apparent contradiction. What was necessary in every case was to consider the particular *point of view* from which the answer is given, and then the failure to mention any condition or conditions of the Gospel is easily understood. And when the reason for the omission is understood, it will at once be seen that the conditions not mentioned are nevertheless binding in every case. The Baptist minister hesitated to accept this apparently logical conclusion, but at the same time he admitted that Mr. Coop's method had helped to open his eyes to a view of the matter he had never before noticed.

Mr. Coop was generous, but not prodigal. He felt that he had to give an account for everything that he possessed, and he was consequently as profoundly concerned about how to spend his money as he was about how to make it. He believed also in spending it while he was living, though he did not think it proper to spend all he had before he died. He knew that capital was necessary in order to carry on such a business as his, and he, therefore, wisely decided to leave enough to his sons to make their business an assured success, while at the same time he tried to inspire them with his own spirit in the matter of doing good. And it was one of his happiest reflections in the last days of his life that his sons both gave promise of

fully carrying out his plans. Just before he went to America the last time, he stated to an intimate friend that he wished his sons to be trustees for him, and carry on the work which he had begun. In this respect his sons have not disappointed his expectations. This fact explains why he did not leave many or very large bequests.

It is difficult to tell just how much Mr. Coop did give during the latter part of his life. It is probable, however, that according to his means very few have ever equalled him in munificent giving. Taking the last ten years of his life, it is at least known that he contributed to religious enterprises, social and educational institutions, and charity, not less than £30,000, and it is almost certain that it would be safe to state the sum much larger than this.

He was also eminently intuitive. He saw and understood things with the intuitive faculty, and he was not often mistaken in his estimates. He was a real woman in tenderness, but a lion in courage and energy. He knew no such word as failure, and worked with a persistency which overcame all difficulties. Few men have ever lived who were more conscientious, or whose aims of life were more thoroughly burned into their innermost souls.

He had an intense mental organisation, and this fact led some to misapprehend his true character. He practically saw only one thing at a time, but he saw that with all the power that was within him. This intensity

sometimes caused him to lose sight of other things for the time being, and to apparently leave these out of his calculation ; and this fact occasionally led even those intimately acquainted with him to misunderstand his actions. His conduct to-day did not always seem in harmony with what it was yesterday ; and for this reason he was at times thought by a few to be somewhat inconsistent. It was even hinted by some very near to him that the change in his religious views, which took place in the latter years of his life, was owing to failing powers of mind rather than to honest conviction resulting from a careful and conscientious study of the Word of God. But he himself knew how unjust this suspicion was, and he occasionally referred to it as one of the saddest things connected with his whole religious life. However, those who studied Mr. Coop's character without prejudice knew that nothing but the deepest conviction of duty could have driven him to take the step which he did, for very few men have ever lived whose friendships were stronger than his. It cost him almost his life to stand in apparent antagonism with his old religious associates, and up to the last moment he sincerely regretted the necessity which compelled him to occupy a position which appeared to them to be unfriendly. He himself never did feel estranged from them on account of religious differences. He always held that these differences were chiefly of a conventional character, or had reference mainly to method and not to principle, and he persistently insisted that his

brethren were to blame for any discordant feeling that may have for a time existed, as he was himself always ready to meet them in a kindly spirit, and was never disposed to break fellowship with them. He claimed that he had only one object in view, and that was to do the work of the Master in the most effective manner, and this he believed could be done best according to the methods he adopted after the Leicester Meeting in 1872.

He never had any desire to leave his brethren, or to start a new movement in which they would not be associated ; but when he found that they would not follow him in his earnest effort to secure American evangelists and to conduct the work in this country on a plan which he regarded as essential to success, he no longer hesitated to do what he believed to be his duty, whether his brethren with whom he was associated in this country co-operated with him or not.

He heartily believed in the work in which he was engaged. And when some urged that, notwithstanding all the breadth and the liberality of the movement which he claimed for it, it would after all end in simply building up another denomination, he would answer them by saying that he had nothing whatever to do with the results. It was his duty to aim right, and then honestly work to realise that aim, but when this was done his responsibility ceased.

Nevertheless, he was not sure the result would be as prophesied by those who were unfriendly to the

movement. Because other similar movements had failed, that was no reason why this one should. He believed that this one was on a surer foundation, and could not, therefore, possibly fail, unless its friends should prove unworthy of the high trust committed to their hands. At any rate, he knew that he was not aiming to start another denomination. Indeed, he did not care to disturb the churches which were already in existence, except so far as was necessary to bring them up to the Apostolic faith and practice. After this was assured, he was quite willing to leave them to work in their own way. He was not asking the religious denominations to join him or to join the churches with which he was specially identified. All he wished was that these denominations would throw away their unscriptural practices, and agree to be governed wholly by the Word of God, and then he was quite willing that in matters of mere expediency or method they should pursue their own course.

But even assuming that the movement would end practically in another denomination, he was still in favour of it. He was accustomed to say that the history of the failures and successes of the past was before us, and we ought, therefore, now to be able to do better than others had done. He contended that we ought to learn something from experience, and, consequently, we ought to be able to build up a better denomination than any that had ever previously existed, even though this was the only thing that could be accomplished. But, as

already stated, he had no desire to assist in making denominations. He felt sure that there were too many already, and hence his constant, earnest desire was, that all who loved the Lord should work together so as to practically answer the prayer of the Divine Redeemer, when He prayed that His disciples might all be one, as He and the Father were one.

This view of the whole matter largely influenced him in contributing liberally to the starting of the *Christian Commonwealth*. He did not care to support a purely denominational paper. He felt that such a paper tended to make sectarians rather than Christians, by pleading for denominational interests instead of broad, liberal, generous work, in which all could heartily unite. Hence, from the very beginning he insisted that the *Christian Commonwealth* should be entirely free from denominational bias, and should, therefore, be devoted to the advocacy of good, right, and truth, no matter where found ; and that it should protest against evil, wrong, and error, no matter at what cost ; and it is only truthful to say that the paper has been conducted upon these lines from the issue of the first number until the present.

But it is time now that others should speak as regards his character and worth. Perhaps no person in this country knew him better than the late Mr. William Heaton of Wigan. For a number of years Mr. Heaton was his most intimate counsellor outside of his immediate family. Just before Mr. Heaton's death, a few weeks ago,



he contributed the following summary of Mr. Coop's character for this work ; and though it refers to some things which have already been mentioned, it would seem almost sacrilege to touch a single line, so far as it relates to Mr. Coop, of a memorial which has been so lovingly written.

Of course it must not be understood that everything Mr. Heaton has written would be endorsed by all of Mr. Coop's old friends ; nor is it necessary that this should be so. Mr. Heaton speaks for himself, and gives his own view of Mr. Coop's character and some of the facts connected with his history, and, consequently, what is said will no doubt be accepted as simply Mr. Heaton's testimony, without committing anyone else to his statements. However, it should not be forgotten that very few other persons had a better opportunity than Mr. Heaton to know the views and feelings, about which he writes.

He says :—

“He was very strong and very pronounced in robust individuality, and his wide knowledge of the Scriptures gave a practical tone and character to it. He looked with very grave suspicion upon anything which seemed to him an innovation. The ‘law and the testimony’ were to him the only and final right of appeal, and he held most tenaciously to everything, whatever it involved, which his conscience considered right.

“Thoroughly satisfied upon the subject of baptism, and upon what he considered are associated with it, as regards obedience, modes of worship, and the ordinances of the Gospel, he never hesitated, though, at the time, his methods were considered

eccentric and peculiar. As a consequence, he suffered much and very frequently because he was not understood ; so much so, that this assumed the character of reproach. Sometimes the terms, 'Timothy Coop's sect,' 'Timothy Coop's creed,' 'Timothy Coop's crotchets,' and 'Timothy Coop's chapel,' became terms of studied contempt in the so-called 'religious world.'

"Not unfrequently he spoke in the open air to large crowds of people, and then would lead what used to be termed, by way of ridicule, *his disciples* singing through the streets. He never seemed happier than when so doing. This shocked the notions of many who yet admired his honest, straightforward dealing and candour.

"No marriage was ever more fruitful for good than Mr. Coop's happy marriage with Miss Haigh. She was the daughter of Mr. John Haigh of Huddersfield, whose name and well-known character as a Christian, a gentleman, and a business man, was, in itself, the embodiment of all the gentler graces of pure, honest benevolence. The daughter inherited fully the father's virtues, and Mr. Coop found in her just the wife, the guide, the inspiration, and the companion he needed at that particular crisis in his history ; and as a result his aggressive piety, his widening sympathies, his restless ambition to do something for Christ worthy of the mercies he had received, were turned into a channel which gradually intensified and developed into purer strength of purpose, consolidated his sympathies, and made him in every way better fitted for the service of his God and the work to which he had clearly been called.

"The pure harmony of domestic life, and the combination of their distinctive virtues, had a very important mutual and relative result, not only in the town, but everywhere their influence reached. Physically, Mrs. Coop was not strong, and yet even in her weakness she was full of charity and good works, and those who knew her best could perceive, even in the midst of incessant labour for the good of others, the ripening of a great spirit, the

growing of a great soul doing its lifework quickly and well, and as if always conscious that her time for service was passing rapidly. One conspicuous trait in her character was her unwearied ingenuity in good deeds.

“She left two sons, Joe Coop and Frank Coop, who are now worthily realising the prayerful hopes and ceaseless ambition of the mother, especially in her last hours, and who have caught something of her spirit, and are now hard at work in the business of the Lord. If the sainted dead have any knowledge of earth—and who dare say they have not?—the mother’s heart must often swell with peculiar joy. This is sacred ground—we say no more.

“For a considerable period previous to the death of his wife, Mr. Coop’s mind had been passing through a discipline of painful transition. She knew it well, and no one this side eternity, knew how much her meek and gentle spirit guided and sustained him. He realised to the full that it is most difficult to unlearn, and only very few of his intimate friends knew how terrible the conflict was with which his soul was sometimes racked. His candid, straightforward character made it all the more difficult. He had never learnt the art of dissimulation, nor how to pander to sentiment for the sake of a position, or gain, or to secure influence. The change in many old ideas and the disclosure to his sagacious mind of their weakness was gradual. He moved step by step, made his footing conscientiously strong as he faced and conquered each difficulty, sighing all the while, with the earnestness of a spirit ‘steeped in prayer,’ for a perfect knowledge of the right, and the way in which his Saviour would have him go.

“It was during this process of varied discipline and trial that the mind of Mr. Coop became more thoroughly solidified, and open, and receptive to the benign influences of the Gospel. His whole soul seemed to become absorbed in intensity of desire to lay himself out and all he possessed in the promotion of the cause of

Christ. The motto of his life became more than ever 'business for Christ.' He gave largely, and he was never so happy as when scattering the thousands with which God had blessed him to help the struggling, to spread the work of religious education, and to serve in any way he could the cause of his Lord.

"It was at this time, especially as a result of his visits to America, that he lost very much of the 'narrowness' which, as he often afterwards observed, had kept him down, and '*shorn him of his wings.*'

"It was not, therefore, unreasonable to expect that no small part of his mental and other trials arose from his difficulty to induce friends who had been associated with him in church-life for years to follow him, or to entertain sympathy with him, in what they termed his *wandering from the true faith and practice*. They were too much fettered to get abreast of him. Unable to understand the process by which he had arrived at his conclusions, and, unfortunately, not valuing, as they ought to have done, the long, arduous, and liberal services he had rendered to the church, they regarded the change in his views as rather the *failure of spiritual apprehension* than the result of prayerful enlightenment. One of the usual and almost inevitable results of this was that Mr. Coop had frequently and in various forms (all the more trying because insidious) to contend with cruel misinterpretation, and, as in almost all similar cases, it becomes near akin to, if not the actual parent of, misrepresentation. Instead of resorting to the scriptural injunction to 'prove all things,' the disposition was shown by some of relying upon a mode of interpretation simply because they had been accustomed to it, rather than upon personal determination after proper investigation to be fully 'persuaded in their own minds.'

"The breach gradually widened, the friction became more and more intense. Mr. Coop struggled hard, if perchance he could conscientiously work with those with whom he had been associated

for so many years, and amongst whom, even to the last, he charitably counted some of his best friends.

"He was not, however, the man to trifle with his conscience, and he knew, too, full well, dating back from his earlier years, that no great achievement, even in church-life, could be secured without keen sacrifice. He realised also, to a very great extent, that 'if a man will live godly in Christ he must suffer persecution.'

"After exhausting every means which patience, prayerful effort, and anxious ingenuity could devise, his duty became clear, and there was ultimately no alternative but to break off openly from what he regarded as the weakness of his former position. Once satisfied as to this, he was equal to the occasion, though it cost much sorrow, and all the more so from the ungenerous interpretation which was placed upon the course into which he had been *forced*, and what grew out of it.

"One special feature of this was the unhappy differences which arose in connection with the church at Southport. This was to him an incessant and deep grief. We draw the veil of forgetfulness, with all the fulness of a forgiving kindness and the kindness of a genuine forgiveness (and as he would wish himself), over the almost overpowering anxiety which this particular trouble entailed. Thanks to judicious counsel, and the efforts of a friend who acted for Mr. Coop in the matter, the differences were ultimately and after much labour amicably arranged. After the church had been formed at Mornington Road, day-schools were erected, and the progress of church-life was, by his instrumentality, placed upon a new and healthier footing, with the satisfaction which only the conscious blessing of God could have inspired.

"But his efforts were not confined to Southport. A large scheme for the religious benefit of Wigan, his native town, was taken in hand, and through the medium of a fast and long confidential friend had made considerable progress towards maturity and accomplishment. His continued ill-health and other hin-

drances caused delay, and his death put an end to this, as well as to other important matters his generous heart had in purpose."

It is thought that in this connection the following truthful description of Mr. Coop's character, by the eminent phrenologist, L. N. Fowler, will be greatly appreciated. This description was written in 1865, when Mr. Coop was in the prime of life, being at that time about forty-eight years of age. It will strike very many as a remarkably faithful representation of the character described; so faithful indeed that, had it been read before the foregoing life was written, some might think that it influenced many of the conclusions arrived at as regards Mr. Coop's mental characteristics. But it was only after the whole life was completed that this description was read, and now not a word needs to be changed in order to make it harmonise with all that goes before it. It is simply a confirmation, from a phrenological point of view, of what Mr. Coop is represented to have been in the preceding pages. Mr. Fowler says:—

"You have a large brain and a strong comprehensive mind. You are full of vitality and warm, ardent emotions; you are well qualified to exert an influence over others; you are infusing in your nature; you are full of life, and are prepared to impart much healthy influence. You are also characterised by a high degree of the mental temperament, giving susceptibility and intensity to your thoughts and feelings. You are rather excitable, and it is not easy for you to restrain your emotional nature. You are known for the following qualities of mind: you have a great desire to

see, experience, gather up information, and inform yourself with reference to the condition of things around you. You are a good judge of property, of men, and of things. You are remarkable for your abilities to retain general information ; you have a good eye for proportions ; can work by the eye ; can cut, fit, and adapt one part to another easily. All your perceptive faculties are fully developed, with a limited exception. You do not care much for theory, thought, and abstract subjects ; you are much more able to illustrate, explain, and make a subject clear and distinct than you are prepared to philosophise. Taking your standpoint, you reason very clearly. You are a quick discerner of character ; are particularly interested in the study of the human mind ; you are seldom mistaken in your first impressions with reference to others ; but you have not much of the disposition to cater to public opinion. You would advocate an unpopular subject without hesitancy if you thought it was true, and you would not mellow your thoughts merely to suit others. You speak forcibly, and at times with eloquence ; but you need more language to enable you to do justice to your thoughts at all times. You are mirthful without being particularly witty ; you are generally in earnest and mean what you say ; you have not much imitation or power to mimic others ; you enjoy the sublime, and your thoughts and feelings magnify ; you take extravagant views of subjects ; are fond of allowing your mind to dwell upon the larger side of the subject under consideration. You are not particularly poetical and sentimental ; still it is comparatively easy for you to give a full representation of your subject. Your mechanical talent is fair ; your benevolence is large ; your sympathies are quite strong ; you easily become interested in others ; you delight to do good ; are much interested in reforms and improvements generally ; but you do not quickly believe ; you are rather slow to take anything for granted. You are able to act upon the feelings of others, and to bring them to your

mode of thinking or feeling ; your devotional feelings are fully developed, but they are not predominant ; you are not superstitious ; you do not worship on Sunday much more than you do on any other day. You do not value the day and the occasion so much as you do the principle ; your strongest religious desire is connected with doing good and promoting the happiness of others.

“You are not quick to make a miracle of anything, nor do you trust so much to providence ; you are more inclined to teach people to trust to their own resources than to trust to providence, independent of proper effort. Hope and conscientiousness are both large, and have a fair though not a controlling influence. You are not a censor, and would not put yourself in that position which would lead you to be a fault-finder. You show two extremes of character : one is benevolence, rendering you very pliable and disposed to yield, comply, and conform to the wishes of others ; the other is your firmness, perseverance, tenacity, and determination of mind. You can be stubborn and very tenacious of your way if much excited or opposed, yet a child would induce you to do things when appealing to your sympathies. You are not fashionable, nor inclined to make a show and display ; you have much more manliness, self-reliance, and independence than you have vanity ; you are cautious in what you do, but not so prudent in what you say ; for you have not much tact, cunning, art, or management. You have a fair sense of property, and capacity to accumulate it, but you are not given to hoarding ; you are more anxious to accumulate it, that you may use it and turn it to account, than you are merely desirous of getting to hoard and keep.

“You are not cruel ; have not a revengeful mind ; are not disposed to cause pain ; you studiously avoid injuring others. Your combativeness is larger than destructiveness, giving you more of the spirit of resistance and self-defence than of the spirit to hurt and hate. Your energy of character depends upon your bodily



health, strength of constitution, and ample amount of vitality, rather than upon combativeness and destructiveness. You need more patience and continuousness of mental action; your thoughts and feelings are too easily diverted. You are liable to have too many irons in the fire, and to attempt to do too much; your social brain is strongly indicated; you are capable of exerting a distinct influence as a friend; you draw persons around you, and you not only make friends but you manage to keep them. You are fond of children, attached to home, and susceptible of strong love as a companion. You are indebted to your large brain, your strong vital organisation, and your strong sympathies and social feelings for your power to influence others and bring them to your mode of thinking. You would have made a first-rate land speculator; you would have sustained yourself in buying and selling as a business man; you have favourable qualities for a physician, a naturalist, or for a man engaged in moral and philanthropic efforts."

Professor C. L. Loos, President of Kentucky University, in writing a leading article to the *Christian Standard* of Cincinnati, U.S.A., speaks thus of the deceased :—

"The news of the death of this excellent man, whose name has now for years become so familiar and so dear to our brethren all over the United States, and in all lands where our people and our missions are found, will be received with the profoundest sorrow. There is not a man among us anywhere that within these last years has so endeared himself to all of us who take an interest in missions as Timothy Coop, for his extraordinary interest in this great work of the Church, an interest manifested by the most abundant and large-hearted liberality.

"It was our privilege to enjoy, for years, an intimate acquaintance with this estimable, exemplary Christian man, since his first visit to the United States to the present. He has been a

cherished guest at our hearthstone in America, and we have enjoyed his kindly, generous hospitality at his home at Southport, England. We knew the man well in all the currents of his thoughts and feelings, in the high purposes and aspirations that controlled his life.

“Brother Timothy Coop was a profoundly religious man. The Holy Scriptures were a supreme law of life to him; like the Psalmist of Israel, ‘he meditated on them day and night.’ His faith was simple and childlike, but enlightened, and firm as a rock reaching deep into the earth. The work of God in Christ, the enlightenment and salvation of the world through the Gospel, was his greatest interest on earth. Missions at home and abroad, in England and the United States, and in other lands, alike drew to them his heart and his large liberality. His piety was genuine and manly, unaffected, and undemonstrative as all the other qualities of his character.

“The fragrance of Timothy Coop’s memory will never pass away from us; it will be cherished lovingly wherever his name is known.

“ ‘Only the actions of the just,  
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.’

“Our brother has left a noble heritage of Christian virtues and noble deeds to his family; wife and children will ‘call him blessed.’ Sister Coop knew how to sympathise with his large, unselfish aims. His children all inherit their father’s deep Christian devotion in the Master’s cause. We know them all, and are glad to know them.”

With what has now been said this work must close. It was undertaken as a labour of love, and even at the present moment the pen almost refuses to give up its task. Much more might be said on a theme so prolific

of suggestion, but nothing more needs be said to tell the story of a noble life. Much no doubt will be read between the lines, and this is sometimes better than what is written. But what is written in this instance has at least the merit in it of a sincere purpose to tell the simple story of a consecrated life.

Here the pen falls, and the story must end, until it may perchance be taken up again in that land where there is no weariness of the flesh and no cloud to obscure the vision ; where all misunderstandings will be corrected, and where all motives will be understood.

FINIS.





